VĀMANA PURĀṆA–A STUDY

[वामनपुराणानुशीलनम्]

[AN EXPOSITION OF THE ANCIENT PURĀṆA-VIDYĀ]

By
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PRITHIVI PRAKASHAN
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The material of the Purāṇas was the outcome of the highest spiritual and religious devotion and processed through the *Yogic* and other religious *Sādhanās* as developed in the first millennium of the Vikrama era, specially under the inspiration of the *Vedic, Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Śaiva* and *Bhāgavata* disciplines, which enveloped the whole country.

The Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study is an exposition of the ancient *Purāṇa-Vidyā*, which included Cosmological material on the one hand and Geographical, Historical, Religious, Cultural and Institutional material on the other as developed in the classical period when the *Purāṇas* were mainly compiled. The author has tried to interpret the *Purāṇic* texts in the light of their *Vedic* background which was avowedly their main expositional purpose as enunciated in the dictum :—

इतिहास पुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत्

It is gratifying to see the Vāmana Purāṇa taking a full share in the drafting of that lasting scripture which has preserved the deep inspiration and profound experiences of spiritual movements during the Golden Age of Indian History, the like of which the world has seldom seen. It was an age of the highest enlightenment when a thousand windows of the soul were opened to the Divine, admitting flood-gates of Ecstasy, Wisdom, Devotion and perfection of moral and spiritual ideals. The very large number of *Stotras* in the Vāmana-Purāṇa is not without its significance ; the ideas in them are like sparks of a vast spiritual conflagaration which has been preserved in the scintillating words or epithets of multifold meanings. By the qualities and range of its contents, it is no doubt a *Mahā-Purāṇa* in the Indian tradition.

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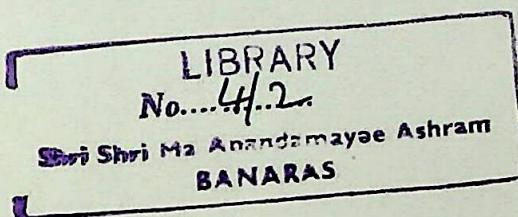
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PREFACE

The Vāmana Purāṇa signifies the legend of the Dwarf and the Giant. The original motif behind the name was Vedic, viz. that which first appeared as of Dwarf form later became transformed as Giant :

Vāmano ha Vishṇurāsa (ŚB. 1.2.5.5) ;
Sa hi Vaishṇavo yad Vāmanaḥ (ŚB. 5.2.5.4) ;
Vaishṇavo Vāmanaḥ Paśuḥ (ŚB. 13.2.2.9).

The Vedic doctrine is that each created object is *Vāmana* in its source but becomes *Virāṭ* in manifestation. This is due to its *Mahimā* or Majesty, that the seed which is *Vāmana* becomes the tree that has a giant form. This transformation is due to the irrespressible potency of the Life-principle or Prāṇa by which the Dwarf is destined to become the Giant. The Ṛigveda states the secret of this miracle as the Three Steps of Vishṇu (*Trivikrama*, RV. 1. 22. 16) :

Idam Vishṇurvichakrame tredhā nidadhe padaṁ

Indeed the whole cosmos or creational manifestation is based on this fundamental law of the Three Strides of Vishṇu which signify a triple movement :

Yasyorushu vikramaṇeshv-adhikshiyanti bhuvanāni viśvā (RV.1.154 2)

The Purāṇa writer derived the original name of his scripture from the above Vedic idea, but he was soaked in the culture of his times and we find that the floodgates of institutional history were thrown open on to the pages of this important Purāṇa text so that a glowing picture of the *Śaiva-Pāśupata, Pāñcharātra-Bhāgavata* and *Saura* religious doctrines is incorporated here with the fiery energy of a rare imaginative mind. Time and again the writer is inspired to draw upon the many contemporary institutions in the field of religion and philosophy presenting a unique record of the deep stirrings that once swayed the life of the people.

Five facts in the making of this Purāṇa may be specially noted. Firstly, the great importance of the Kurukshetra region where certainly this Purāṇa was composed as a text for the glorification of the local centres of pilgrimage (*Sthala-Māhātmya*). Even at the cost of repeti-

tion and over-elaboration the writer reverts to the subject with unusual zest.

The second point is the probable date of this Purāṇa which by all indications may be put in the first half of the seventh century A.D. when Harshavardhana ruled in the north and Mahendravarman Pallava in the south (whose name is actually mentioned, Vn. 95. 70). As we know from history the house of Sthāneśvar of Kurukshetra was knit together with the ruling family of Mahodaya or Kanauj by the marriage of Harsha's sister, Rājyaśrī to Grahavarman Maukharī,– a background which is truly reflected in this Purāṇa (Ch. 76).

The third distinguishing feature is the preponderance of material of the *Pāśupata-Śaiva* religion, specially its cult-worship and its fanning out in Kurukshetra and other principal centres of north India. This material requires to be specially noted for reconstructing the religious history of Gupta civilisation and is virtually supported by the descriptions of Bāṇa Bhatta in the Harsha Charita while describing the strong influence of the *Pāśupata Śaiva* teachers in Śrīkāṇṭha Janapada or Kurukshetra and specially on its ruler Prabhākaravardhana. The Śaiva teachers employed the technique of installing new *Śiva-Liṅgam* creating local legends about them and also producing quite a number of brilliant and happily worded *Stotras* of Śiva which must have been delectable to the religious devotees amongst the people.

The fourth distinguishing quality which impresses itself at once on the mind of a careful reader is the spirit of large synthasis and religious tolerance that permeates the pages of the Vāmana Purāṇa from beginning to end. The writer has gone to the farthest extent in declaring the unity of Śiva and Vishṇu, having made it an oft-repeated theme in many ingeneous ways. He puts the following in the mouth of Śiva himself :

'If you cut me into twain with an edge-saw, even then you will find the eternal presence of Vishṇu in my form (*Yatnātkrakachamādāya chindhadhvaṁ mama vigrahaṁ tathāpi dṛiśyate Vishṇurmama dehe Sanātanaḥ*, Vn. 67. 37).

Indeed all the Śiva-Gaṇas who were no other than the *Mahā Pāśupata* teachers (*tathā tathācha jāyante mahā pāśupata gaṇāḥ*, Vn. 67. 49) solemnly ask for a boon from Śiva that they be purified of the sin which had entered their souls owing to their making a distinction between Śiva and Vishṇu :—

Bhinna drishṭhya mahat pāpam yadaptam tatprayātu naḥ, (Vn. 67. 56). Śiva imparts the following teaching to all his followers :—"in your zealous devotion to Śiva and out of conceited ignorance, you have spoken ill of Vishṇu (Vn. 67. 26) which is not proper. Vishṇu and myself are one and the same ; there is no distinction between us It is one essence which exists in a twofold form (*ekamūrtirdvidhāstithā,* Vn. 67. 28). Wherever you be, think of us both as subsisting in a single body and in a single form ; (*ekarūpamchaikadeham*), (Vn 67. 35).

The Vāmana Purāṇa may truly be said to be the supreme document of synthesis between Śaiva and Vaishṇava religions as they had been evolved in the happy ferment of ideas germane to Gupta civilisation.

The fifth notable feature of the Vāmana Purāṇa is the abundant material about the Asuras whose great leaders like Bali, and Vāmana have been painted in the most glowing terms. Its reason is twofold ; firstly, the two interlocutors of this Purāṇa are Pulastya and Nārada. Nārada was the great Bhāgavata teacher, the leading exponent of the Vaishṇava doctrines whom we may designate as *Āgama-Vṛiddha* so far as the *Pāñcharātra-Bhāgavata* religion was concerned. But even higher than Nārada is Pulastya, who is the narrater and the teacher of the doctrine, in reply to the questions of Nārada. Pulastya is traditionally remembered as the ancestor or *Gotra*-founder of the Asuras whose grandson was Rāvaṇa himself. Naturally Pulastya is just to the Asuras by pointing out in relief the moral and spiritual qualities which were the foundations of the Asura order of society. The second reason why the Asuras find fair appraisal is histortical, as one can easily see through the thin veneer of the story. As we have pointed out in the introduction and at several places in the commentary, the Asura is a pseudonym for the Buddhists in the mind of this Purāṇa writer. The teachers of the moral code followed by the Asuras are said to be *Māgadhamunis,* i.e. the recluse monks of Magadha and the moral code which the latter preached is practically identical with the teachings of the Buddha. The Purāṇa writer was a personal witness to the fact that the *Dharma* contained in those instructions was quite an exalted one and powerful enough to bring about a rejuvenation of society and naturally worthy of praise. He has said this in so many terms while admitting the Asura realm prospered by virtue of its adhering to those moral tenets of Truth, non-violence, etc. The thirteen rules of the

ethical code in which the Asura leader Sukeśin was instructed by the *Munis* of Magadha are given in Chapter 15 (see p. 33-35 of the commentary). Just as the *Pāñcharātra-Vaishṇavas* were entitled to the epithet *Mahā Bhāgavatás*, similarly the Asuras who were followers of *Māyāmoha* or *Śāstā*, viz. Bhagavān Buddha, were justly called *Mahā Bhāgavata* and ranked equally high. But from the orthodox point of view their *Vijñāna* or ideas were fickle and thus doomed to discomfiture at the hands of the *Bhāgavatas* in Vārāṇasī at the site of *Lolārka*. We have explained the purport of this legend in the commentary (see p. 36).

Thus this commentary of the Vāmana Purāṇa makes transparent the true significance of many historical legends and references and enables us to assess the cultural import of the numerous descriptions which are cast in the characteristic Purāṇic mould. The Vāmana Purāṇa although of the limited extent of about six thousand verses ranks very high from the nature of its contents. The deeper one descends into the full meaning of the text, the more instructed one feels about the religious history of a period (4th-7th century A D.) in which the religious and philosophical inspiration had reached their climax and taken the definite form of mutual disputations and lively exchanges as recorded by Bāṇa while describing the hermitage of Divākaramitra and as actually preserved in the disquisitional literature of the Brāhmaṇas, Buddhists and Jainas of this period.

It is gratifying to note the contribution that the Vāmana Purāṇa makes to the religious history of India. Within the limits of its own literary style and the bounds of Purāṇic idiom it is surprising that it has poured into its pages such rich material which modern critical scholarship may recover without much difficulty. Such is the purpose of the present commentary for the first time in the annals of Sanskrit criticism.

For the illustration of Vāmana I am indebted to Shri Rai Krishnadas, Director, Bharat Kala Bhavan, BHU, where this beautiful sculpture of the Pāla-school of Magadh (c. 8th century A.D) is deposited. It shows the highlight of this great school and is in very good preservation. The other example in line drawing is taken from Ellora sculpture. The geographical material in the Vāmana is also rich in its own way (ch. 13) and is being illustrated here in the form of several maps for which I am grateful to Shri Shivakumar, M. A., a

student of my Ph.D. class. The map of Kurukshetra is taken from Cunningham's Archæological Survey Report, Vol. XVI with such additions as we have found necessary in the light of our present study.

Our heart is now on a similar study of the Liṅga Purāṇa, followed later by those of the Brahmāṇda and Vishṇu Purāṇas.

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Dated : 24 Jan. 64

VĀMANA PURĀṆA—A STUDY

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study is on the lines of my commentary entitled 'Matsya Purāṇa—A Study, published in July, 1963. I have given there an exposition of the ancient *Purāṇa-Vidyā,* which included cosmological material on the one hand and geographical, historical, religious, cultural and institutional material on the other as developed in the classical period when the Purāṇas were mainly compiled. I have tried to interpret the Purāṇic texts in the light of their Vedic background which was avowedly their main expositional purpose as enunciated in the dictum : इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत् ।

It is now becoming increasingly clear that the meaning of the Vedas was clearly comprehended by those who were attempting its re-statement in the pattern of the Purāṇic style. From the point of view of scriptural tradition the Purāṇas appear to have gained a position of universal acceptance and distinctive significance so that under the twin categories of *Nigama* and *Āgama,* or Veda and Purāṇa, they came to have the highest authority in the field of spiritual doctrines and religious practices. So far as the worship of the spiritual principle symbolised as *Deva,* the highest Transcendent Being of metaphysics is concerned, the Purāṇas furnish an inspired method which was intensely practical. Their material was the outcome of the highest spiritual and religious devotion and processed through the Yogic and other religious *Sādhanas* developed in the first millennium of the Vikrama era, specially under the inspiration of the Vedic, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Śaiva and Bhāgavata disciplines, which enveloped the whole country.

The material about philosophy and religion contained in the Purāṇas is of great esoteric significance of which the broad purpose is patent, viz. representation of the ancient *Veda Vidyā* or the comprehensive triadic cosmogonical doctrines about the Three Devas, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva, who are the focal point of Purāṇic metaphysical and religious formulations. By the use of this symbolical language of the Three Devas the Purāṇas have attempted what has never been done elsewhere in the religious literature of mankind, viz. the building of an encyclopeadia of religious and philosophical symbolism based on the

three-fold pattern of cosmic manifestation, which at once holds good both on the level of the Universal and the Individual, and although true to the immanent trinitarian aspect. It was inspired by a philosophy of the Transcendent One of the highest order. It was an exalted discovery in the light of which the Purāṇic writers were able to invoke an extra-ordinary enthusiasm for their religious statements as are met with in most of the Purāṇas.

It is gratifying to see the Vāmana Purāṇa taking a full share in the drafting of lasting scripture that has preserved the deep inspiration and profound experiences of spiritual movements during the Golden Age of Indian History, the like of which the world has seldom seen. It was an age of the highest enlightenment when a thousand windows of the soul were opened to the Divine, admitting flood-gates of ecstasy, wisdom, devotion and perfection of moral and spiritual ideals. The very large number of *Stotras* in the Vāmana Purāṇa is not without its significance ; the ideas in them are like the sparks of a vast spiritual conflagaration which has been preserved in the scintillating words or epithets of multifold meanings.

There are certain noteworthy facts which the present study presents to our attention Firstly, the Vāmana Purāṇa is a document compiled in the Kurukshetra region of North India on the glorification of which its whole attention is concentrated, specially of the many *Tīrthas* in that area.

Secondaly, it is much more patent that the religious movements of the Bhāgavatas and the Pāśupata Śaivas have been admitted with equal elequence into the making of this Purāṇic text. As we have shown many a time on the basis of actual references, the Pāśupata Śaiva movement originating in Mahārāshṭra under the inscription of Lakulīśa spread to many centres both in the north and the south during the first seven centuries of the Christian era. But this religious movement which was on the one hand fired with an intense devotional zeal for Śiva, was at the same time characterised by unexcelled spiritual magnanimity with the result that their devotion to Vishṇu was also of the same high order.

In one place Śiva himself speaks to his *Gaṇas* : Even if you cut me into twain, you will find the presence of Vishṇu in my heart.

यत्नात् क्रकचमादाय छिन्दध्वं मम विग्रहम् ।
तथापि दृश्यते विष्णुर्मम देहे सनातनः ॥ (Vn. 67.37)

In another place Vishṇu tells the Devas who were in search of Śiva : 'Śiva is present here in my heart in the form of a Liṅga, where you may worship him.

तमूचुर्नैव पश्यामः स्वतो वै त्रिपुरान्तकम् ।
सत्यं वद सुरेशान महेशानः क्व तिष्ठति ॥
ततोऽव्ययात्मा स हरिः स्वहृत्पङ्कजशायिनम् ।
दर्शयामास देवानां मुरारिर्लिङ्गमैश्वरम् ॥
अथोवाच सुरान्विष्णुरेष तिष्ठति शंकरः ।
मद्देहे किं न पश्यध्वं योगं प्राप्य प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ (Vn. 62.21-23)

The spirit of broad-minded tolerance and catholic approach of the Pāśupata Māheśvara doctrinaires is very creditable as recorded in the Vāmana Purāṇa and deserves to be better known in the history of Indian religious tradition.

The Vāmana Purāṇa was originally of Vaishṇava or Pāñcharātra Bhāgavata denomination, as indicated by its name, and had a liberal sprinkling of Vaishṇava themes, particularly the legend about the Dwarf and Giant Incarnation of Vishṇu. The srory of *Vāmana* and *Trivikrama* is incorporated twice in this Purāṇa (Chs. 30-31, 89-93), and the Purāṇa writer was conscious of this Vedic background, viz. Vishṇu taking three strides and measuring out the three worlds in his three steps or *Trivikrama* form. The symbolical meaning of the Dwarf and the Giant forms of Vishṇu has been explained in this commentary.

A distinguishing feature of the Vāmana Purāṇa is the preponderence of the *Asura* motif. Hardly any other Purāṇa takes up the account of the many *Asura* heroes in such a liberal and zestful manner as does the Vāmana. It is probably due to the narrator being Ṛishi Pulastya, the ancestor of the Asuras. The interlocutor is Nārada, the highest teacher of the Bhāgavatas. It has painted the *Asuras* in an edifying way and has not hesitated in giving them the credit for observing the highest ideals of *Dharma*, in which both the Mahā-Bhāgavata Prahlāda and his grandson Bali participate as rulers of the kingdom of righteousness. There is a patent reason for this attitude. It is known from Vishṇu Purāṇa, Liṅga Purāṇa and other texts that the followers of Buddhism were referred to in these descriptions as, the *Asuras* who were deluded by the teachings of *Māyā-Moha* who was no other than the incarnation of Vishṇu for the purpose of inculcating a philosophy that was different from the orthodex tradition,

and of which the heterodox points of controversy were at variance with the teachings of the five-fold schools of the Veda, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Śaiva and Vaishṇava. In spite of their *Asura* appellation, the followers of the *Munis* of Magadha, i.e. Buddhist philosophers of the great Universities functioning in Magadha like Nālandā and Vikrama-śilā, no one could shut one's eyes that they were also good religious people believing in an ethical and moral religion based on *Ashṭāṅgika Dharma*, parallel to the *Daśāṅgika Dharma* of Manu. In the Matsya Purāṇa and also here the Bhāgavatas tried to re-state their ten-fold ethical *Dharma* of universal applicability (*daśāṅgika 'sāmānya-lakshaṇa dharma*). By including Prahlāda and Bali in the list of Mahā-Bhāgavata devotees, the Brāhmanical writers felt assured that they had done their best to bring the adherents of rival faiths under the same mantle. There is no doubt that the assimilative influences thus released contributed to a deep social synthesis in which doctrinal and other differences were brought to a minimum and a spirit of concord and amity re-established amongst all orders of society. This active synthesis was at its highest point during the seventh century when Harsha Vardhana was king of north India (606-648). His brother Rājyavardhana was a *Parama-Saugata* and his father, Prabhākara-vardhana *Paramādityabhakta.* while he himself was a devotee of Sūrya, Vishṇu and Buddha, distributing his religious emotion and charities equally amongst them. The Vāmana Purāṇa is conceived in the true spirit of its time, viz. north India during the reign of Harsha.

One of the major features of his religious approach is the emphasis on Sūrya worship, which it has elaborated in several places; specially the great festival of Sūrya-worship celebrated at Mahodaya seems to be a factual description of the Sun-worship held at Kannauj under the direction of Harsha himself, from where he moved in procession to Prayāga to celebrate his five-yearly assembly.

The other story in relation to *Lolārka*, or the Fickle Sun-God at Vārāṇasī also appears to be based on historical circum-stances. As we have interpreted in the commentary, it was a trial of strength by methods of conference and disputation and Śāstric Vindi-cation between the Bhāgavatas and the Buddhists. It is also indicated that the philosophers on the side of Buddhism were of the *Yogāchāra* school believing in the philosophy of *Vijñānavāda.* The whole trend of

the story in relation to Sūrya as *Lolārka* seems to suggests that the place now sanctified as *Lolārka Kuṇḍa* near Bhadaini in Vārāṇasī was the scene of a Buddhist establishment of Yogāchāra monks. The actual discovery of Buddha images from that site which are now deposited in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavana furnishes archæological proof of an actual monastery in the precincts of *Bhadravanikā*. In the Gupta period Vārāṇasī had reorganised its educational and religious establishments as shown by the discovery of a number of sealings at the ancient site of Rājghāt which belonged to the religious temples and educational colleges of Ṛigveda, Sāmaveda and Yajurveda functioning in Vārāṇasī. Yuan Chuang also mentions that a large number of *Deva* shrines existed in Vārāṇasī. It appears that Vārāṇasī had become the spear-head of the religious movements of the Śaivas and the Bhāgavatas. It is very probable that there was some big philosophical meet in which the teachers of the various schools participated and which eventually resulted in the discomfiture of the Buddhist *Vijñānavāda* philosophers in comparison with the Bhāgavata doctrinaires, as indicated by the statement that even Sūrya paid homage to Vishṇu in Vārāṇasī to regain his former glory.

The Vāmana Purāṇa supplies some solid data about the different sects amongst the Śaivas; viz. Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kāladamana, and Kāpālika. We do not as yet know much about their distinctive beliefs and practices during Kushāṇa and Gupta times, and therefore the information supplied in Ch. 6 is quite welcome for re-constructing a historical picture of the Pāśupata Śaivas. It is stated that Bhāradvāja was a Mahā Pāśupata and his disciple was King Somakeśvara through whose influence the sect gained in strength. The Kāladamana sect owed its origin to Ṛishi Āpastaṁba whose disciple was Krātheśvara, probably a king of a teacher of Vidarbha which was then known as the *Kratha-Kaiśika* country. The Śaiva sect was descended from Śakti, son of Vasishṭha and spread through the teacher Gopāyana.

The fourth sect was that of the Kāpālikas which seems to have been known also as that of *Mahā-Vratins* which descended from a teacher named Dhanada. It is likely that these names are a fiction invented to formulate an early history or Vedic origins for the four sects. One thing may be noted, that just as there were four prominent schools amongst the Buddhists, similarly there were amongst the

Śaivas as named above (Vn. 6. 87) and also amongst the Vaishṇavas, e.g. *Pāñcharātra, Sāttvata, Bhāgavata*, and *Vaikhānasa*. The recovery of their distinctive beliefs and practices is a field for future research.

There are several brilliant insets by which a graphic picture of the Bhāgavata institutions is presented, e.g. that of Brahmā's Sabhā (Ch. 24) giving a list of the fields of knowledge that were cultivated by the traditonal *Āchāryas*. The emphasis on the glorification of Sarasvatī, who is both a Goddess of Ṛigvedic antiquity and also a river of Kurkshetra, is a noteworthy feature of the Vāmana, Purāṇa, and in one word, it stands as the symbol of their outlook in the whole religious struggle or movement organised by them, viz. adoration of the Goddess of Learning and the rehabilitation of the supreme position of Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Upanishads, Dharma-Śāstra and, above all, of the Mahā-Bhārata and the Purāṇas. Vedavyāsa was made the spearhead of this approach and he was renamed as Rishi Vāchchyāyana, son of Goddess *Vāk* or Sarasvatī. River Sarasvatī of Kurukshetra was made the basis of the symbolism of Goddess Sarasvatī invoked in the form of several *Stotras* with numerous epithets (cf. Ch. 32). We may at once see that the writer was well acquainted with the topographical course of the river Sarasvatī in Kurukshetra with its seven tributaries as given in Ch. 33.

The tradition of the *Yaksha* shrines of Kurukshetra which had come down from ancient times is also recorded in the Vāmana as in the Āraṇyaka-parva. Some of the Chs. as 38, 39 give us their lists of *Tīrthas*, more or less in the nature of a *Sthala-Māhātmya*.

In these descriptions the place of honour is given to *Sthāṇutīrtha* which appears to have been the ancientmost Śiva Liṅga in this area and the supreme deity who eclipsed the worship of *Yakshas* and *Nāgas*. The Vāmana Purāṇa is virtually composed as a *Māhātmya* to Sthāṇeśvara Śiva.

The story of the *Liṅga-Patana* of Śiva is Based on the motif of the *Munis* whose women-folk were enamoured of Śiva's Liṅga. The trend of the story is a subtle reflection on the morals of the Buddhist monks in the monasteries who were ultimately converted to the way of the Pāśupatas in putting their faith in the efficacy of the Liṅga (Ch. 43).

There are two major elements in the constitution of the Vāmana Purāṇa ; firstly, the story of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī and the birth of Skanda, which the author has taken from its model in the Kumārasambhava of Kālidāsa, repeating a good number of phrases (Vn. 52.41). The second, is the great legend of Mahishāsura-Mardinī, which is borrowed from the Devī-Māhātmya chapters of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. Of course, both were considered to be dessential to reorganise the Vaishṇava contents of the Vāmana in a new Śaivite context.

One of the most remarkable references in the Vāmana is to the Goddess *Koṭṭavī*, who was also called *Charchikā*, and was the presiding deity of Hiṅgulā, i. e. Mount Hiṅgulāja in Baluchistan. We have explained in the commentary the historical implications of this reference to the very important cult of *Koṭṭavī*, the ancient Mother Goddess of Tamil Land who was once, according to the Tamil classics,*Tiruma-ndiram* and others, worshipped in the 'Five Indies' of which several links have been gathered as shown in the commentary. We are for the first time having some light on the ancient history of three great Goddesses named *Koṭṭavī*, *Nanā* and *Charchikā* ; the first belonging to the Tamilian tradition, the second to the Vedic and the third to the classical Gupta civilisation.

Another remarkable feature of the Vāmana which cannot be missed owing to its frequent occurance, is the reference to south Indian geography, religion and even history. For example, Kāñchīpurī is mentioned as the best of the capital cities ; in chapter 71 Indra having gained victory over the *Asuras* in the north is directed by Śiva to go to the Malaya Mountain, before he returns to Amarāvatī, so that he could settle scores with the Asura hosts of Pātāla also amongst whom Pāka and Pura, both of Vedic sources, are specially mentioned. We know it is a fact of history that at first the Jaina and then the Buddhists were predominent in south India until finally, during the reigns of Mahendravarman Pallava and his son, Narasiṁha-varman Pallava, they were vanquished by the Bhāgavatas and the Śaivas whose victory gave birth to gigantic movements of art and religion under the patronage of the Pallava emperors in the first half of the seventh century. This the author of the Vāmana Purāṇa portrays the discomfiture of the Asuras at the hands of the Devas (Ch. 71),

At the fag end of the Purāṇa, there is mention of a Vishṇu temple (*Keśava-Devālaya*), built by *Mahendra-Śilpi-Pravara* (Vn. 75. 70), which means both that the temple was built by Maya Asura who was the architect of Indra, and that the great shrine was put up by King Mahendravarman who considered himself to be the most excellent amongst the *Śilpins*, and it is stated that provision for its repairs, etc., were made by the king and his wife, much emphasis being laid on this fact that both the King and the Queen ordered the building of the temple. This reminds us of the stone-sculptures of Mahendravarman and his Queen, found carved at Mahā-Mallapuram.

A fourth important reference to south India is to the great Festival of Lights *Dīpa-pradāna-Mahotsava* (Vn. 92. 56), named after Asura Mahā-Bali, celebrated in the month of Śrāvaṇa, after *Śakra-mahotsava*, great *Oṇam* festival of the Kerala country. (92. 57-58).

A noteworthy inset occurs in the Vāmana (Ch. 75) about the *Padminī Vidyā*, which was a popular doctrine of Goddess Śrī-Lakshmī or Padminī as propounded in the Gupta period, and of which a detailed account is preserved in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (Ch. 68), which was the source of the Vāmana account.

It will thus appear that the Vāmana Purāṇa as at present available in ninety-five chapters is constituted of the most important and diverse material relating to the geography, religion, cults, and beliefs of ancient India as developed in the great period of Gupta civilisation from about the fourth to the seventh century A. D. There is visible in its contents a process of growth by which the Vaishṇava and the Śaiva materials were grafted one upon the other. By the quality and range of its contents, it is no doubt a Mahā-Purāṇa in the Indian tradition.

The present study is the third in the projected eighteen volumes on the exposition of the ancient Purāṇa-Vidyā. It is my prayer to God to make this accomplishment possible in due course of time.

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Vishṇu in Vāmana Incarnation. Pāla Sculpture. C. 8th century.
Courtsey : Bharat Kala Bhavan.

VĀMANA PURĀṆA

EXTENT OF THE PURĀṆA

The Vāmana Purāṇa (Veṅkaṭeśvara Press edition) contains 95 *Adhyāyas* in 5,815 *Ślokas*. It is counted as one of the 18 Mahā-Purāṇas, and is said to have contained 10,000 Ślokas according to its description in the Nāradīya-Mahā-Purāṇa (Ch. 105) which also states that the Vāmana consisted of a *Pūrva-bhāga* and an *Uttara-bhāga*. The *Uttara-bhāga* was comprised of 4 *Saṁhitās*, viz. 1. Māheśvarī devoted to Kṛishṇa, 2. Bhāgavatī devoted to Devī, 3. Saurī devoted to Sūrya, and 4. Gāṇeśvarī devoted to Gaṇapati. Each of these included a thousand verses.[1] The Uttarabhāga is specifically named as Bṛihad-Vāmana, and if its 4 Saṁhitās are taken into account, the extent of 10,000 ślokas would agree quite well with the text as related in the Nāradīya-Purāṇa.

But the position in the printed text does not accord with the description in the Nāradīya and the number of chapters is only 95, and we do not find any division of Pūrva-bhāga and Uttara-bhāga. A study of the manuscripts so far collated for the purpose of recasting a critical edition of the text does not in any way indicate the probable extent or contents of the Uttarabhāga, although some of them nominally refer to the two divisions and some even speak of additional chapters as pertaining to the Bṛihad-Vāmana or Uttara-bhāga of the Vāmana (See V. Raghavan, The Vāmana Purāṇa, Purāṇa Bulletin, Jan. 1962. pp. 184 162). It appears that the original compilation of the Vāmana-Purāṇa took place in North India in the region of Kurukshetra', extolled as the most holy of all religious places (क्षेत्रेषु यद्वत्कुरुजाङ्गलं वरं तीर्थेषु यद्वत्प्रवरं पृथूदकम्, Vn. 12.45).

Later on, however, during the course of its transmission, South Indian redactors found in it a convenient forum to interpolate into it narratives of local holy places of religious pilgrimage or temples sacred to Vishṇu or Śiva. Dr. Raghavan cites a particular instance that in a Mackenzie manuscript (No. 10. 3586', there are three chapters (31-34) bearing on the greatness of a shrine named Tiruvoondi of Kalyāṇa Purī in the South, which includes a Varāha Māhātmya.

1. Dr. Raghavan, "The Vāmana Purāṇa, *Purāṇa* Bulletin, Vol. IV p. 187.

We shall, however, leave the problem of such southern accretions to the original text and concentrate our attention on the text as available in the printed edition.

METRES

Another noteworthy fact in the beginning of our study is about the metres of the Vāmana Purāṇa. Out of about 6,000 ślokas, over 5,000 are in Anushṭup metre of 32 syllables each, which is in fact the ancient time-honoured metre of the Purāṇas. About 700 of the remaining are in various classical metres (Varṇa-vṛitta and Mātra-vṛitta) ranging from 11 syllabled Pādas to 21 syllabled pādas amongst Varṇa vṛittas and also some Āryā metres[1]. The names of these classical metres are Indravajrā, Upendravajrā, Upajāti, Śālinī, Vaṁśastha, Indra-Vaṁśā, Tāmarasā, Ruchirā, Vasantatilakā, Mālinī, Śikhariṇī, Pṛithvī, Śārdūlavikrīḍita Sragdharā, Pushpitāgrā and Gāthā. These stanzas are scattered in the body of the text at the choice of the redactor and they are a sort of pointer that the text has been retouched or amplified in those particular places. The best period when these flowery metres were most in favour was the Gupta period and that may be the time when such textual additions were made.

A VAISHṆAVA PURĀṆA—Originally the Vāmana Purāṇa was Bhāgavata in character and inspiration, but this point may not now be insisted upon too far, as even matter and stories relating to Śiva and his family form an integral part of the text. It affords ample material relating to Śiva's victory over Andhakāsura, marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī and the birth of Vināyaka and Kārttikeya, victory of Devī over Mahishāsura and a number of Śaiva-stotras, besides the glorification of Śiva Liṅgas and their installation. So far as the Vaishṇava material is concerned, it relates the greatness of king Bali, and his discourses with Prahlāda ; the birth of Vāmana and Vāmana-charita in vanquishing Bali constitute its major portions.

The next conspicuous feature of the contents of the Vāmana is the copious description of Tīrthas and Tīrtha-yātrā, specially of the Kurukshetra region and along the banks of the sacred Sarasvatī river. The Tīrtha-yātrā of Prahlāda, although rich in geographical

1. A study of these classical metres from the statistical point of view was made by Pt. Thakur Prasad Dvivedi and published in the Purāṇa Bulletin (Jan., 1963, Vol. I. No. 5, pp. 144-159).

material, is rather diffused, darting abruptly from point to point in many directions. The Bhuvana-kośa chapters, although not complete are still important in the Vāmana text.

The first chapter opens by introducing the interlocator of this Purāṇa, *viz.* Ṛishi Pulastya approached by Nārada who asked some specific questions, *viz.* Vāmana-charita, Pārvatī-charita, battle between Prahlāda and the Devas, and the glory of the Tīrthas as well as an account of Dāna, Vrata, Upavāsa, etc. similar to rites and customs found in other Purāṇas also.

Chap. 1 then gives a dialogue between Śiva and Satī in which latter on the advent of the hot season requests Śiva to build a house for her, but Śiva replied that he was homeless and liked to live in forest. When the rainy season came, Satī repeated her request for some kind of shelter, but Śiva pleaded his indigence or absence of wealth because of which he had to depend on tiger's skin for seat and serpents to adorn his person. Satī got offended at her husband's reply, but had to spend her time in that homeless condition. Śiva in order to offer some relief to her distressed wife went up a mountain top beyond the reach of the clouds, and thus he became known as Jīmūtaketu (1.31),

Chap. 2 first gives an ornate description in true Kāvya style of the Śarat season, similar to that of the rainy season in Ch. 1, both of which seem to have been inspired by the two beautiful descriptions of Vālmīki.

Daksha-Yajña

Then begins an account of the sacrifice of Daksha Prajāpati. To his Yajña, Daksha invited all the gods and Ṛishis with their wives, but he did not extend an invitation to his own daughter Satī and her husband Śiva. Nārada asked why an invitation was not sent to Śiva, and Pulastya replied that Śiva was excluded by Daksha from the list of invitees because he is a Kapālin.

Śiva as Kapālin

Nārada then asked why Śiva was called a Kapālin, skull-bearer. In reply to this Pulastya relates an old legend, somewhat expressing also a cosmogonical account. The Purāṇa-writer begins by referring to the Ekārṇava doctrine, when the whole cosmos was

submerged under the primeval flood. In this context also may be understood why Śiva is mentioned as Jīmūta-ketu, for the cloud is the symbel of water that bursts open the primal-flood, and Śiva in his transcendent form is conceived as being the lord of that ocean and above the waters and creation. The story then takes a normal turn, viz. that Vishṇu, referred to here only as Bhagavān, was sleeping in the Ekārṇava ocean. We have already explained the Ekārṇava doctrine with reference to the formless or unmanifest condition prior to the creation of the cosmos.[1] It was from within the womb of the ocean, called Samudra, Salilam, Āpaḥ, etc. that the first impulse of creation originated which is described as the awakening of Nārāyaṇa Purusha who was of the nature of Sattva. After his awakening he created Brahmā, the deity of Rajas who was endowed with five heads.

Meaning of the Five Heads of Brahmā

The story of the five heads of Brahmā occurs also in the Matsya[2] and the five heads symbolise the five-fold pattern of the cosmos in which the four faces correspond to the four direction and the fifth head on the top symbolises the unmanifest source of the visible or manifested cosmos. After the birth of Brahmā or the principle of Rajas, was born Śiva representing the principle of Tamas. These two Guṇas symbolised by Brahmā and Śiva actually represent the two-fold creative potentiality of Movement and Inertia. In other descriptions, for example in Matsya, they are said to be of the form of two Asuras named Madhu and Kaiṭabha (M. ch. 170; ibid. p. 268-69). Brahmā and Śiva quarrelled with each other as to what was their origin and which one of them was superior. Brahmā's reply which was not respectable, infuriated Śiva who clipped off the fifth head of Brahmā, with his finger end and that became the Kapāla which stuck to the body of Śiva, Here in the midst of the story the Purāṇa-writer uses some philosophical terminology saying that Śiva represented the principle of Tamas-Ahaṁkāra. According to other accounts, Ahaṁkāra is preceded by the creation of Mahat or the Universal which is represented by Brahmā or the principle of Buddhi or cosmic mind. The centre of individuation or the ego that is produced in the midst of the Universal represents the Tamas Ahaṁkāra that is the Ego enveloped in darkness or soiled in matter.

1. V. S. Agrawala, Matsya Purāṇa, A study, 1963 (All-India Kashiraj Trust), pp. 9-12.
2. Ibid. p. 50.

When the fifth head of Brahmā was severed, Brahmā created a Purusha who appeared fully armed before Śiva, but said that since the latter was so sinful he would not care to kill him. Thereupon Śiva proceeded to Badarīnātha in the Himālayas where on the top of Nara-Nārāyaṇa peak he beheld god Vishṇu performing Tapas. Śiva begged for alms and Vishṇu advised him to cut off his left arm with a trident. Śiva did so and three springs of water flowed from that source, the one going up in the sky, and the second one flowing on earth received by Ṛishi Atri from which Durvāsas representing the aspect of Rudra (Rudrāṁśataḥ, Vn. 2.48) was born. The third part of the stream fell in the Kapāla held in Śiva's left hand, from which a Babe was born who çhallenged the Purusha created by Brahmā. The two Purushas struggled for a thousand years but neither of them succeeded in overcoming the other. Seeing this, Brahmā hurled his Purusha to get merged in Sūrya, and Śiva sent back his Nara to become merged in its source, namely the Arm of Vishṇu.

INDRA-VISHṆU CONFLICT, A ṚIGVEDIC MOTIF

This legend seems so puerile but the idea which inspired it was Vedic as based on the following Mantra of the Ṛigveda :—

उभा जिग्यथुर्न पराजयेथे न परा जिग्ये कतरश्चनैनोः ।
इन्द्रश्च विष्णो यदपस्पृधेथां त्रेधा सहस्रं वि तदैरयेथाम् ॥

(RV. 6. 69. 8)

Both of them enter into rivalry with each other but none has been the victor over the other. Indra and Vishṇu were rivals to each other, and out of their conflict were produced the Three Thousands. In Vedic symbolism we find the two gods, viz. Vishṇu and his rival Indra who is the same as Rudra Śiva. Here Vishṇu represents Sattva and Indra represents Rajas In other words, they are typical of two movements viz. centrifugal that is Rudra and centripetal that is Vishṇu. Both are balanced against the state of rest that is in the centre. The Three Thousands represent the three principles of Mind, Life and Matter, what in Vedic symbolism are known as Veda (Manas), Loka (Prāṇa) and Vāk (Pañcha Bhūtas). These constitute the Triple Thousand or Infinities (Tredhā Sahasram) which correspond to the Triads of the Three Guṇas, the Three Devas, the Three Lokas, the Three Prāṇas or the Three Feet of Vāk. The Purāṇic writer had the background of this Mantra in his mind and he has woven from it a story

in his own manner in which the three gods Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva participate. Brahmā symbolises Rajas, Vishṇu symbolises Sattva and Śiva symbolises Tamas. The Purusha that is created by Brahmā is the principle of Rajas that is movement or activity which is destructive. Here Vishṇu aud Śiva are reconciled in the story, and whatever power exists in Rudra is derived from the arm of Vishṇu which takes the form of the Babe or Nara who stands for the conjoint principle of Sattva and Tamas. Vishṇu as Sattva represents the quiet or still substratum of energy against which both Brahmā and Rudra, Rajas and Tamas make their appearance. They are locked in an eternal conflict, and none of them is able to overpower the other even after a trial for a thousand years. Here the motif of Vishṇu is introduced as the final source of the two opposite forces which collide against each other but are balanced. The reference to the three-fold streams is in itself significant although the name of the Gaṅgā is not mentioned and the meaning is obvious as implying the triple floods of the Life-stream. The stream that flows in heaven is the symbol of Adhidaiva ; the second stream which is received by Atri in his hermitage is the symbol of Adhibhūta from which the terrific form of Ṛishi Durvāsas, the wrathful one was produeed ; the third stream which saturates the Kapāla of Śiva refers to the Adhyātma current of the Life-principle. The Kapāla or skull in the left hand of Rudra symbolises the individual Life-principle as manifested in matter.

Śiva and Brahma-hatyā Motif

Chap. 3 gives an account of how Śiva became afflicted with Brahma-hatyā and how he went about roaming and visiting many holy Tirthas in order to be relieved of his curse. He went to the Nara-Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha in Badarikāśrama, then the holy sources of Yamunā and Sarasvatī, then Pushkarāraṇya, Magadhāraṇya, Saindhavāraṇya, Naimishāraṇya and Dharmāraṇya and other Tīrthas, but his stigma remained unwashed and his soul was not purified. Ultimately he went to the Kuru-Jāṅgala country and saw there an image of Vishṇu with Garuḍa. Śiva extolled Vishṇu with a Stotra and the latter asked him to go to Vārāṇasī where his curse would come to an end. Thereupon Śiva came to the sacred city of Vārāṇasī situated between the two rivers named Varaṇā and Asī. Here he visited the holy spots named Lolārka, Daśāśvamedha, Ādi-Keśava and the sin

of Brahma-Hatyā subsided, but the Kapāla stuck to his hand and was removed only after his taking a bath in the sacred pond known as Kapāla-mochana Tīrtha. The Kapāla-mochana Kuṇḍa is still a sacred spot in Vārāṇasī. Its Māhātmya is thus recited but in a manner that contributes to the glory of Vishṇu whose advice was followed by Śiva and who was propitiated by means of an appropriate and meaningful Stotra (Vn. 3. 14-23).

Meaning of Brahma-hatyā

The real question relates to the symbolism of Brahma-Hatyā. In the Purāṇas the Brahma-Hatyā motif forms part of several legends. According to the Vedic legend, the greatest exploits of Indra was his killing the demon Vṛitrāsura, but this involved him in Brahma-Hatyā since Vṛitra is said to be a Brāhmaṇa. In the present story, Brahmā takes the place of Vṛitra and Śiva that of Indra. The motif is identical, namely, that the principle of Brahmā is trangressed because of which an original sin accrues to the Divine Creator and unless that is washed off there is no escape. The implication is that the divine principle or Deva which is immortal must descend to the level of matter which is darkness and death. This descent of the Universal Deva to the level of the Pañcha Bhūtas or in material manifestation is the inevitable ordinance of creation. The Universal or Mahat or Brahmā is eclipsed in its glory by being subjected to the principle of individuation. This phenomenon of the wedding of the two principles of immortality and death, of Amṛita and Mṛityu, of Deva and Asura, symbolised as Brahma-Hatyā. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is quite clear in its explanation :—

Esha ha vai sākshān-mṛityur yad Brahma-hatyā (ŚB. 13. 3. 5. 3.). This verily is Brahma-hatyā in visible form what we call Mṛityu. The principle of death is the murder of Brahmā. Brahmā is the principle of consciousness or Chetanā in each individual centre, and death spells its greatest sin or tragedy. This is a problem for each individual how he can grapple with the problem of death. Death is the most hideous and destructive sin that can afflict any one. It is bound to come sooner or later. The Kapāla or human head is the symbol of the individual or the Mind or the conscious ego which carries on it the load of this sin. Indra is the symbol of Madhya Prāṇa and Śiva is but another name of Prāṇāgni :—

अग्निर्वै रुद्रः, प्राणा वै रुद्रः (जैमिनीय उप. ब्राह्मण. ४. २. ६; ŚB. 5. 3. 1. 10.)

त्वम् अग्ने रुद्रः (ऋग्वेद II. 1. 6)
यो वै रुद्रः सो ऽग्निः (ŚB. 5. 2. 4. 13).
स एष रुद्रो यद् अग्निः (TB. 1. 1. 5. 8. 9).

Thus from the point of view of symbolism, both Indra and Rudra point to the single principle of individuated life manifested in each organism whose inevitable destiny is the grim phenomenon of death. How that may be averted is the problem for every one. The Purāṇic story puts it in a graphic manner by introducing the story of Kapāla in Śiva's hand and his becoming Bhairava or terrific in form until he is relieved of the Brahma-Hatyā and the Kapāla.

NARA-NĀRĀYAṆA PRINCIPLE

The Purusha created by Brahmā and Nara created by Śiva also symbolise the two principles of Nara and Nārāyaṇa who are conceived as Ṛishis performfng austerities together on the Nara-Nārāyaṇa peaks of the Gandhamādana mountain. Obviously Purusha is Nārāyaṇa. The Purāṇa-writer is careful enough to repeat the words several times with the obvious reference to Nārāyaṇa. The Bhāgavata teachers laid great emphasis on the conception of the twin principles named Nara and Nārāyaṇa :—

नारायणो नरश्चैव सत्त्वमेकं द्विधाकृतम्

(उद्योगपर्व ४८.२०)

In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Nārāyaṇa is mentioned as the Friend or Companion of Nara नारायणो नरसखः Bhāgavata 7.6.27) It is said that Nara and Nārāyaṇa were born from the womb of Mūrti who was the daughter of Daksha, and married to Dharma.

धर्मस्य दक्षदुहितर्यजनिष्ट मूर्त्यां नारायणो नर इति स्वतपःप्रभावः

(भागवत २.७.६)

In the Nārāyaṇīya Dharma Parva of the Moksha Dharma Parvan of the Śānti Parva, it is clearly stated that Nara and Nārāyaṇa were performing penances on the Badarīnātha hill when Nārada, the great Bhāgavata teacher, approached them for instruction, and those two Ṛishis explained to him the secret of the Ekāntin Dharma of the Bhagavatas :—

ज्ञानं तदेतदमलं दुरवापमाह
नारायणो नरसखः किल नारदाय ।
एकान्तिनां भगवतस्तदकिञ्चनानां
पादारविन्दरजसाप्लुतदेहिनां स्यात् ॥

(भागवत ७.६.२७)

Thus the Nara-Nārāyaṇa motif was strongly stamped on the mind of the Bhāgavata doctrinaires. In fact it was the ancient symbolism of the two Suparṇas or Purushas, one of whom eats the fruit of the tree of existence, and the other is merely a witness and does not himself enjoy. This doctrine is found in the Ṛigveda itself and repeated in the Upanishads and many a time in the Purāṇas and subsequent literature :—

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥
(ऋगवेद १.१६४.२०)

Thus Purusha or Nārāyaṇa is the symbol of Transcendent Being or Universal Soul and Nara of the individual soul that is Jīva. Both of them are rooted in a single source, and as depicted in the Purāṇic story, Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu is their common progenitor.

The Sacrifice of Daksha

Ch. 4 continues the story of Daksha Yajña to which Śiva and Pārvatī were not invited. Śiva was omitted because of the stigma of a Kapāla attaching to him, and so Pārvatī also was not invited. Jayā, a friend of Pārvatī and in this story a daughter of Ahalyā who was the daughter of Daksha married to Gautama, came to see Satī and informed her of the Yajña being carried on by Daksha. This news of her being slighted by her father gave such a shock to Satī that life departed from her body then and there. Śiva seeing that Satī had given her life owing to insult by her father became most indignant, and out of his own self created Vīrabhadra and many other terrific Gaṇas who proceeded to Kanakhala, the place of Daksha's sacrifice with Rudra himself at their head.

Here Vīrabhadra is made the spearhead of the battle between the hosts of Rudra and the divine hosts present in the sacrifice of Daksha whose leader was Dharma. Vīrabhadra is described as Gaṇeśvara or Gaṇeśa, leader of the Gaṇas. He is several times described as having the face of a lion. The Ṛishis officiating as priests fled in terror and approached Vishṇu for help.

Then ensues a graphic account of the grim battle between Vishṇu and Vīrabhadra, the latter setting at naught all the weapons hurled by Vishṇu and finally even swallowing his discus (Chakra). Vishṇu was enraged and challenging Vīrabhadra to a duel combat

2

violently threw him on the ground with the result that, owing to the great shock, the Chakra came out of the body of Vīrabhadra. Vīrabhadra made a report of the situation to Śiva who in order to avenge the defeat of his Gaṇa himself entered the fray against Vishṇu.

पश्यामि तं नतं भूमे रैभ्यं नाम महामुनिम् ।
ममैवाराधने युक्तं सर्वकर्मसु निष्ठितम् ।।
ततो वै तप्यमानं तं गङ्गाद्वारमुपागतम् ।
आम्रवृक्षं समासाद्य दृष्टः स मुनिपुङ्गवः ।।
दर्शितोऽयं मया चात्मा हेतुमात्रेण केनचित् ।
मया यदाश्रितश्चाम्रस्तेन कुब्जत्वमागतः ।।
एवं कुब्जाम्रकं ख्यातं स्थानमेतन्मनस्विनि ।

वराह पु०, अ० १२६।८, १२-१४

अन्यत्कुब्जाश्रमंपुण्यं स्थानं विष्णोर्महात्मनः ।
सम्पूज्य पुरुषं विष्णुं श्वेतद्वीपे महीयते ।।
यत्र नारायणो देवो रुद्रेण त्रिपुरारिणा ।
कृत्वा यज्ञस्य मथनं दक्षस्य तु विसर्जितः ।।

कूर्म पु०, उ०, ३५।३३-३४

तीर्थं कनखलं पुण्यं महापातकनाशनम् ।
यत्र देवेन रुद्रेण यज्ञो दक्षस्य नाशितः ।।

कूर्म पु०, उ० ३७।१०

Battle between Vishṇu and Rudra

Ch, 5 continues the account of the battle between Vishṇu and Rudra, in which Vishṇu guaging the situation disappeared from view and quietly retired to Kubjāmārka, a sacred spot near Kanakhala. The Kubjamārka Tīrtha is described in the Varāha Purāṇa also where it is stated to be the place of Tapas by Raibhya Muni (Varāha Purāṇa Ch. 126). Then the remaining gods Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Bhaga, Pūshan and others came forward to try their strength against Rudra but they were all worsted in the combat. Pūshā suffered the loss of his teeth and Bhaga was blinded in the eyes.

Symbolism of Bhaga and Pūshan

As a matter of fact the last two were Vedic motifs which are associated in the Purāṇas with the disturbance created in the sacrifice of Daksha. The meaning of these two symbols should be clearly

understood. Bhaga is the name of Sūrya or of Prāṇa which is enveloped in Matter. The five gross elements of Matter are like a screen which intercept the vision of Bhaga. Bhaga is also the principle of generation, the womb or Yoni in the mother which becomes an eye opening on the conscious world by the birth of the life-principle embodied in Matter. The whole symbolism of the sacrifice of Daksha points to the negation of the divine principle from material manifestation. Daksha is the genius of Yajña, who thinks that the individual Yajña can be completed without the presence of the transcendent Lord Śiva or of the Universal Mother, Goddess Satī, but that is not possible. As soon as the link between the individual organism and the universal Purusha is snapped, the individual Yajña is doomed to failure. All the gods that come to attend the sacrifice of Daksha were discomfited, but the worst sufferers were Pūshā and Bhaga since both of them are specific deities relating to Matter. Pūshā is specially described as the Lord of Paśus or animals, that is, materialised forms. Each Paśu is an eating animal who uses his set of teeth for chewing the food. So long as this organ in the mouth is hale and hearty, life continues in the body, but when the process of assimilation of food is disturbed, the function of Pūshā comes to a halt. In the Veda god Pūshā is described as the eater of fried groats (Karambha) which does not require the help of teeth (*Adantakaḥ Pūshā karambha-bhāg iti,* KB. 6.13., ŚB. 1.7.4.7.). It is stated in the Vāgāmbhṛiṇī Sūkta : He who opens his eyes, eats his food with me (*Mayā so annamati yo vipaśyati* RV. X. 125. 4). The meaning is that each Prāṇic organism or individual life-centre which opens its eyes to the conscious world must continue to share the banquet of the Universal Vāk that is in Paraméshṭhī. If this rule is broken, i. e. the link between the individual and the Universal is disturbed, the result is disastrous to the organic centre of the individual which is the Yajña of Daksha. Daksha is the son of Aditi and Aditi is the same as Satī. Daksha thinks that his Yajña can be completed with the presence of all other gods and goddesses, so he invites all his daughters excepting Satī who was the eldest and all other gods excepting Rudra who is Agni. This is the tragedy of Daksha's Yajña. Agni is Rudra and Agni is identified with all gods (*Agniḥ sarvā devatāḥ*) : Where there is the presence of Agni, i.e. Prāṇgni or Life-principle, all the other divine powers or Devas are present there but without Agni in the individual organism or Yajña no god can function. This is the moral of the story of Daksha-Yajña-Vidhvaṁsa. Pūshan is the

symbol of Bhūta and Bhaga of Prāṇa. Both of these are unable to function without the presence of Rudra in the Yajña.

Śiva as Hunter

Śiva as Mṛiga-Vyādha – The extremely elastic nature of the Purāṇic legend is visible in the story of Rudra's exploit related in Ch. 5. It is further said that the Agni in the Yajña was extinguished by the Tejas of Rudra. Agni then transported itself in the sky in the form of a Mṛiga which may mean both deer and animal, and Śiva retaining one half of his power in the sacrifice on earth pierced Agni with the other half, using an arrow which went straight into the body of the Mṛiga. Śiva is described as Kāla who pursued the deer in the sky present in the form of the innumerable stars, and the other half which remained in the sacrifice on earth is named Jaṭādhara, deity of the matted locks. Both these motifs have a symbolical significance. The Tārakāmaya Chakra or Steller system is the visible form of the rotating wheel of the time that is mentioned here as one half of Śiva.

Each star or planet is verily the symbol of a roaming deer which never stops and is always on its legs in the unlimited forest of space. It is the arrow of Rudra which has pierced each and everyone of these constellations in the remotest parts of space and that is responsible for keeping them in a regulated system which is the cosmos, Rudra is the great hunter, Mṛiga-vyādha or Mṛigāyu :—

Devā vā etaṁ (Paśupatim) mṛigāyuriti vadanti (TB. 14. 9. 12)

Ya u éva mṛiga-vyādhaḥ Rudra u éva saḥ (AB. 3. 33). The other half of Rudra which remained on earth became the deity of matted locks (Jaṭādhara). All matter is symbolised as Keśa or Jaṭā, the refuse part thrown out by living matter which in Vedic symbolism is known as Pravargya. Each centre of life with a body is called Brahmaudana, that is, food-eating Brahma and the matter that is eliminated by it is called Pravargya. The hair is just a visible symbol of Pravargya. The matted locks of Śiva are the five elements which have been created out of the body of Prajāpati and thus truly represent a Pravargya portion. It is thus legitimate to speak of Śiva's earthly form as having matted hair. The material elements include Ākāśa also which is the most subtle of the five elements and represents the other four also. Therefore Śiva is described as Vyoma-keśa, i. e. the great god whose matted hair are symbolised as the space.

The implication of the two halves of Śiva enveloping the earth and heaven is that both space and time are his inherent parts. By one half he is the immortal principle of Time and by the other, the mortal principle of Matter.

Ch. 5 continues the description of Mahā-Kāla Śiva in his cosmic form as the 27 constellations and the 12 signs of the zodiac (Dvādaśa Rāśi). It appears that this part of the text was admitted after the introduction of the zodiacal system in the astronomical texts of the Gupta period about the 4th century A. D.

Ch. 6 gives an assemblage of several motifs relating to Śiva. The story begins with Dharma and his wife Ahiṁsā who gave birth to four sons named Hari, Krishṇa, Nara and Nārāyaṇa. The latter two performed Tapas in the Himālayas. Indra deputed Rambhā to put the Munis to a test. She came and demonstrated her charms but the two Ṛishis, remained unmoved against the powers of the invisible god of Love called Anaṅga or Bodiless.

Kāmadeva and his Five Arrows

The story then turns to the account of Kāmadeva being made Anaṅga through the wrath of Śiva. We have the usual legend of Śiva and Satī in a summary form but going into details about the love-stricken condition of Śiva going about like a love-lorn person being under the influence of the several arrows of the God of Love like Unmādana, Vijṛimbhaṇa, Saṁtāpana. Wandering in this hopeless condition Śiva came across Pañchālika, a Yaksha who was the son of Kubera. Seeing the distress of Śiva Pañchālika withdrew into his own person the effect of the arrows of Kāma which were afflicting Śiva. This made the God pleased with Pañchālika and he gave a boon to the Yaksha to be worshipped in the region between the Himālayas and Kālañjara.

This is an important reference and the Yaksha named Pañchālika is certainly the same as Pañchika of Buddhist mythology who is no other than Kubera. In the Purāṇic version Pañchālika is made the son of Kubera by implication. The Purāṇa-writer wants to convey that the Yaksha Pañchālika is but another form of Kāmadeva and the influence of the five arrows of the God of Love is within the power of the Yaksha. These arrows are said to be of two kinds, viz. made of five kinds of flowers and the second set of the five kinds of mental emotions and strains caused by the feeling of love, e. g. Unmādana,

Tāpana, Śoshaṇa, Stambhana, and Sammohana. These love conditions infatuate, stupefy, freeze and cause anguish to the mind or the whole inner being of a person. It seems that there existed the idea of Pañchika and Pañchālika as a Bhāgavata version of the Buddhist deity whose worship seems to have been popular in Madhya Deśa.

After his meeting with Pañchālika Yaksha, Śiva retired to the Vindhya mountain, but the God of love pursued him there because of which Śiva took shelter in the Dāruka Vana forest of the Himālayas. There he went about begging for alms from Āśrama to Āśrama. The Saptarshis also had their hermitage in the Himālayas. The wives of the Seven Ṛishis excepting Anasūyā and Arundhatī fell in love with Śiva. This enraged the Ṛishis and they cursed Śiva that his Liṅga would fall down on earth.

Power of Śiva-Liṅga

The story here takes a new turn. Śiva's liṅga was no ordinary thing. It represented the power of the whole universe, and when that power entered the earth she began to quake and lost her balance. This agitated Brahmā and he went to Vishṇu to invoke his help for propitiating Rudra. The mighty Śiva-Liṅga was like a pillar between earth and heaven and its immeasurable form, expanding into space above and into the nether world (Rasātala) below, made everyone unbalanced In order to regain their poise Brahmā and Vishṇu counselled together to measure the Liṅga of Lord Śiva. Brahmā went upward to heaven and Vishṇu went downward into the depths of the earth, but both of them could not reach the farthest limits of the Liṅga of Lord Śiva, and having returned they declared it to be Infinite (Ananta). The whole world in heaven and on earth was overwhelmed with the glory of Śiva, and both Brahmā and Vishṇu began to praise Lord Śiva as the omnipresent being who pervades the whole universe and whose power and glory are beyond measure. Thus propitiated, God Śiva became reconciled and his Liṅga which had fallen became reunited.

Meaning of Liṅga-Patana

The above motif of Liṅga-Patana of Śiva is the Purāṇic version of the Infinity of the unmanifested cosmos in its higher or absolute form. Liṅga literally means a symbol, Nidāna or Pratīka, and according to Purāṇic conception there are two aspects of creative

activity, the one is unmanifest that is called Liṅga as defined in the very beginning of the Liṅga Purāṇa :—

अलिङ्गो लिङ्गमूलं तु अव्यक्तं लिङ्गमुच्यते,
अलिङ्गः शिव इत्युक्तो लिङ्गं शैवमितिस्मृतम् ।
प्रधानं प्रकृतिश्चेति यदाहुर् लिङ्गमुत्तमम्,
गन्धवर्णरसैर्हीनं शब्दस्पर्शादिवर्जितम् ।
अगुणं ध्रुवमक्षय्यमलिङ्गं शिवलक्षणम् ।

(Liṅga Purāṇa 1.3. 1-3)

Here is a definite statement in which God Śiva, as the transcendent being, is defined as Aliṅga and his emanation that is Pradhāna, Prakṛiti or Avyakta is called Liṅga. The material cosmos is the Liṅga of Śiva, the symbol by which the existence of the Absolute Purusha or Śiva is established. The Saptarshis are the seven-fold creative powers which constitute Avyakta Prakṛiti. They are further defined as Mahat, Ahaṅkāra and the Pañcha-Bhūtas (*Mahadādi-Viśeshāntāḥ*). They are in fact the constitutents of Prakṛiti ; their female energies fall in love with Śiva and cause an emission of his male energy which results in the manifestation of the cosmos. This is symbolised as the Liṅga-pāta of Śiva. Śiva is the same as Agni and it is in other words the manifestation of Prāṇāgni in Matter that is the objective of this story.

The energy of the male principle which fecundates Prakṛiti is beyond measure. It is a Jyotirliṅga, i. e. a pillar of light of which the best symbol is Sūrya. Sūrya is that Jyotirliṅga which is enveloped by a flaming aureole which pervades both heaven and earth and neither its beginning nor its end are known. There is not only one Sūrya but millions and billions of Sūryas in one axial alignment which make up this infinite Jyotirliṅga of Bhagvān Rudra who is creating universes upon universes by his infinite energy. It is this conception of the Jyotirliṅga in the story of Brahmā and Vishṇu trying to measure it above and below, and both of them realising its immeasurable nature.

Two Forms of Śiva

According to the Śaiva principle, Śiva has two forms. The one is the Linga or phallus and the other is the anthropomorphic image or the human form comprising the five elements. The phallus is the symbol of the seed, i. e. yet unborn (*Bhuvanasya retaḥ*), but that seed

fecundates the principle of motherhood that is Virāṭ Prakṛiti or Universal Nature. She has the potency of converting that seed into the material form which has the seven component parts, viz. Mind, Life and the five elements of Matter. These forms proceed from the unmanifested cause and symbolise the Purusha-Vigraha or the human form of the God. Both Liṅga-Vigraha and Purusha-Vigraha exist side by side, the one as cause and the other as effect. In Brahmnical iconography they are found together, but mostly it is the Liṅga form that is considered higher and is installed in the temples. The Liṅga or the phallic form is called Sthāṇu, the stable principle, and the opposite of it is the form in which the sense organs are evolved. The basic difference between the seed and the body is that all the different manifestations of the sense organs are unmanifest in the Liṅga. The phallus is aniconic and the human form is iconic. In the latter the principle of various sense organs becomes explicit because of the presence of the Indriyas, the power of Indra functioning behind them being established beyond doubt. Thus the two aspects of Śiva underlie the significant legend found in this Purāṇa and in many other places in different versions. The outer form of the story may differ, but the essential truth remains the same, viz. the power of Śiva as Purusha and of Prakṛiti as his Liṅga, both of which go together as the Ardhanārīśvara form of the deity.

Four Sects of Śaivism

At this point the Purāṇa-writer takes up a new theme relating to the literature of the Śaivas. It appears from the description given here that there were four divisions amongst the followers of Śaivism. The names of these four Schools were :—(1) Śaiva, (2) Pāśupata, (3) Kāla-damana and (4) Kāpālika. The meaning of Kāla-damana is not quite clear but it appears that this was the same sect as that of the Kālā-mukha Śaivas who were probably so called from their belief in Śiva being Kāla or death.***

A pseudo-historical origin of the four sects is described. A Śaiva sect is said to have originated from Śakti son of Vasishṭha. Śakti, son of Vasishṭha was the incarnation of Śiva himself. (*Śaktināmā Vasishṭhasya-sutaḥ svayaṁ śivo babhūva,* Vn. 6. 88). Śakti's disciple was Gopāyana who seems to have been a pre-eminent teacher in the line of teachers of the Śaiva School.

Kālāmukha Sect

If the original name of this sect was Kāla-damana then they believed in the Mṛityuñjaya aspect of Śiva, which is also the meaning of Kāla-damana, Vanquisher of Kāla or death. The story of Śiva's Mṛityuñjaya form is associated with Ṛishi Mārkaṇḍeya whom the gracious intervention of Śiva saved from the clutches of Death. The identity of the Kālāmukha and the Kālāntaka or Kāla-damana school of Śaivism seems to be very probable, although definite evidence in the evolution of the sect is lacking. The later history of the Kālāmukhas as the sect developed in south India is well supported by inscriptional evidence, and there are references in the Yaśastilaka Champū to this sect during the Rāshṭrakūṭa period (Handiqui. Yaśas-Tilaka Champū and Indian Culture, pp. 509-510). In South Indian epigraphs, the Kālāmukhas are mentioned as Vratins and Mahā Vratins. This is a point which finds support from a reference in the Nala-Champū of Trivikrama Bhaṭṭa (10th century) who describes the Kālāmukhas as the followers of the Mahā-Vrata doctrine (Kaliyuga-Śiva-śāsana-sthitāniva mahā-vratikānataḥpātibhiḥ kālā-mukhair vāna-raiḥ saṁkulam, Nala-Champū, Uchchhvāsa VI, p. 163, Kāśī Edition). It appears that the Kālāmukhas claimed descent from Lakulīśa, the original founder-teacher of the Pāśupata sect and it is possible that they had bifurcated at an early date. Their association with the Mahā-Vratin or their themselves being designated by the epithet Mahā-Vratin indicates that the Kāla-damana sect was untouched in the early stages by degenerate practices which crept into it in later times. We have a clear reference to the Mahā-Vratin in the Jānakī-haraṇa of Kumāradāsa and in the Harsha-charita of Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa, where the great Pāśupata teacher Bhairavāchārya is mentioned as a Mahā-Vratin.

The Pāśupata sect is here given as the distinct name of a school of Śaivism, but according to the Liṅga-Purāṇa (7.51), the followers of all the four disciples of Lakulīśa, viz. Garga, Kuśika, Mitra and Kaurushya were known by the general designation of Māheśvara and Pāśupata. The Pāśupata school as the name indicates believed in the meta-physical doctrine of Śiva as Paśupati and all creatures as Paśu who are under the influence of Pāśa or bondage of the world and who can attain liberation only through the grace of Śiva on the one hand and Sādhanā on the other. The Pāśupatas were strongly organised in North India as evidenced by the Mathura Pillar inscription of 380 A.D. of the time of Chandragupta II.

There is a possibility that the four sects or schools mentioned here were descended from the four disciples of Lakulīśa. This finds some support from the above inscription of Mathura which mentions two Pāśupata teachers as tenth in descent from Kuśika, the direct disciple of Lakulīśa. If this be so, then the school named Śaiva must have been descended from Garga and that of Kāla-damana from Mitra and of Kāpālika from Kaurushya. The Kāpālika sect is obviously related to the Kapālin form of Śiva or Bhairava who roamed about as beggar with bowl in hand until he was relieved of the curse by the grace of Vishṇu in the Kapāla-Mochana Tīrtha of Vārāṇasī.

It is stated that Bharadvāja was a Mahā-Pāśupata, and his disciple was king Somakeśvara. According to this, the tradition of Pāśupata School descended in the line of Kshatriyas. The origin of the Kāla-damana sect which is mentioned also under the name of Kālāsya or Kālā-mukha is traced to Ṛishi Āpastambha whose disciple was Krātheśvara. The fourth sect named Kāpālika descended from the Mahā-Vratin teacher named Dhanada whose disciple was Arṇodara, a Śūdra by caste. Thus, the worship of Śiva became organised under these four sects and having seen to these arrangements Brahmā retired to his abode. Śiva also collected his cosmic Liṅga form and established a miniature Liṅga in the Chitra-Vana and continued his lone wandering on the earth. In this condition Śiva became the object of attack by the God of Love, but opening his third eye he reduced Kāmadeva to ashes. From the bow of Kāmadeva were produced five beautiful flowers which became his arrows, Champaka, Bakula, Pāṭala, Jātī and Mallikā (Vn. 6.91-102). Thereafter Śiva retired for penances to the Himālayas.

Chap. 7 opens with a short inset relating to the birth of Urvaśī from the thigh of Nārāyaṇa. This Nārāyaṇa is the same as the Ṛishi of that name performing Tapas in the Himālayas. Kāma entered his Āśrama but the Ṛishi remained unmoved in the face of all temptations of love and as indicating his own power he miraculously created out of his thigh a beautiful woman of unexcelled beauty who became known as Urvaśī. Kāmadeva and all other gods became surprised and then Ṛishi Nārāyaṇa sent Urvaśī as a present to God Indra in heaven.

The legend of Urvaśī is found in the Ṛigveda where she is conceived of as the Universal Woman, a paragon of beauty, who agitates the minds of Mitra and Varuṇa. Their semen falls inside the jar and also outside it from which the sages Agastya and Vasishṭha took their birth. Urvaśī is the symbol of the Universal Female whose presence excites the twin divine powers or male energies of Mitra and Varuṇa, the former incarnating as Vasishṭha and the latter as Agastya who are respectively the symbols of Prāṇa and Apāna. Here in the Purāṇic story the place of Mitra and Varuṇa is taken by Nārāyaṇa who himself creates Urvaśī or the beautiful woman as a challenge to the power of Kāma.

The story then takes an abrupt turn in glorification of Tīrthas. It is said that once when Prahlāda was ruling and there was reign of Dharma on all sides, Maharshi Chyavana went to bathe in the Narmadā at Nakuleśvara Tīrtha. A great serpent seized him but the Ṛishi remembered Nārāyaṇa in his heart and the poisonous effect of the dragon was nullified, but still he dragged him to the underworld, where he was produced before the Daitya king Prahlāda who honoured him and put a question about the number of Tīrthas on earth, in heaven and in the underworld. Instead of giving any detail of the Tīrthas an abrupt mention is made of Prahlāda going to Naimishāraṇya on pilgrimage. There he saw a series of interlocked arrows rising from the earth to the top of a tree, and looking for the source of this phenomenon, he found the two Ṛishis Nara and Nārāyaṇa whom he challenged. They also retaliated. First Nāra and Prahlāda tried their strength against each other by using many kinds of weapons and then Nārāyaṇa and Prahlāda entered the fight.

The battle between Prahlāda and Nārāyaṇa is described in terms of all the arts of war as were then known in which many kinds of weapons and missiles were used on both sides, but the fray remained indecisive and Nārāyaṇa asked Prahlāda to retire and perform his evening daily routine. Filled with anxiety, Prahlāda approached Nārāyaṇa at night time and asked him why he had failed to obtain victory even after fighting for a thousand years. Nārāyaṇa who is here called Pītavāsaḥ, i. e. Pītāmbaradhārī, the wearer of the yellow robe, then revealed to Prahlāda the secret of obtaining victory saying that it was only through the power of Bhakti that he could attain success. He himself as Nārāyaṇa had performed Tapas for the establishment of Dharma in the three worlds (सोऽहं दानवशार्दूल लोकानामनुकम्पया, धर्मप्रवर्त्त-

नार्थाय तपश्चर्यां समास्थितः। तस्माद्यदीच्छसि जयं तमाराधय दानव, तं पराजेष्यसे भक्त्या तस्माच्छुश्रूष धर्मजम्, Vn. 8. 41-42). Thereupon Prahlāda was filled in his heart with devotion for Nārāyaṇa and making over the kingdom to Andhaka he retired to Badarikā Āśrama to perform Tapas.

The story then takes an exalted turn and reflects the mind of some great Bhāgavata writer who conceived of the king of Dānavas dedicating himself and all his powers at the feet of Nārāyaṇa. When Prahlāda had entered upon a course of severe austerity he had a vision of both Nara and Nārāyaṇa and his heart became filled with the glory of God Vishṇu and he dedicated himself at the divine feet. God Nārāyaṇa was pleased with him and granted him three boons of which Prahlāda requested single-minded devotion or Bhakti to Nārāyaṇa. The God then asked him to go back to his kingdom and instruct the Asuras in the way of Dharma. Prahlāda hesitated at first but under the instruction of the Lord he went back to the city of the Asuras where he was received with great honour by Andhaka and others who requested him to take charge of the kingdom. But Prahlāda was firm in his devotion to Nārāyaṇa and he preferred to stay there as a Bhakta amongst his people teaching them the path of Dharma and Bhakti.

The obvious moral of the above story is to demonstrate the superior influence of the Bhāgavata religion which had attracted even the king of the Asuras who became a firm believer in the divine glory of Nārāyaṇa. It was well-known in the legend of Hiraṇya-Kaśyapa that Prahlāda was a devotee of Vishṇu. The same motif has been turned to good account by an ingenious writer, creating a beautiful and impressive account for the glorification of the Bhāgavata Dharma and the ideal of Bhakti.

In the beginning of Ch. 9 Nārada asks Pulastya a question as to why Andhaka who was blind was given the kingdom by Prahlāda. To this Pulastya replied that Andhaka who was the son of Hiraṇyāksha and thus a cousin brother of Prahlāda, although was sightless in the beginning but obtained vision during the life-time of his father and therefore, consecrated to kingship by Prahlāda.

Then Nārada asked about the conduct of Andhaka. Pulastya replied that Andhaka performed penances and obtained from Śiva the boon to become invincible from gods and men. He appointed Śukrāchārya as his priest, and conquering the whole earth, over-powered all the kings.

Andhaka then repaired to the Meru mountain. Indra arrayed his forces and marched to the same place. Here the vehicles of various gods are described as below :—

Indra—White elephant
Yama—Buffalo named Pauṇḍraka
Varuṇa—Śiśumāra
Kubera —Nara
Eleven Rudras—White bulls
Chandramā—Haṁsa
Twelve Ādityas—Chariot yoked with horses and camels
Eight Vasus—Elephant
Yaksha—Nara
Kiṁnara—Serpent
Twin Aśvins—Horse
Maruts—Antelope
Bhṛigus (Kavis)—Parrot
Gandharvas—Walking on foot.

The vehicles of the Asuras are also described.

Then a fierce combat ensued between the Devas and the Asuras with the following matches :—

Andhaka against Indra
Prahlāda — Yama
Virochana — Varuṇa
Maya — Agni
Jambha — Kubera
Sañchāra — Vāyu.

Ch. 10 continues the account of the battle between the Devas and the Asuras raged in a most fierce manner, involving all the elemental forces between earth and heaven. It is a brilliant and powerful description by a poet who evidently seems to be conversant with all the various aspects of the science of war. In the heavens Andhaka conquered the Devas. He then came down to the earth and brought all the kings under his subjection. Thereafter he went to Pātāla to the city named Aśmaka.

One of the Asuras was Sukeśin whose city was hurled down by Sūrya from the sky to the earth.

Chap. 11 gives an account of Sukeśin who had performed Tapas and obtained from Śiva the boon of an aerial city with which he moved to and fro. Once he went to a forest in Magadha and visited some Ṛishis and questioned them about the Dharma which they followed The Ṛishis explained to him twelve kinds of Dharmas followed by different Devas, Asuras, Ṛishis and men. This is interesting in the light of its historical implications. The Ṛishis of Magadhāraṇya replied as follows :—

1. The Dharma of Devas consisted in performance of Yajña, Svādhyāya and worship of Vishṇu.
2. The Dharma of the Daityas meant physical valour, jealousy and battle.
3. The Dharma of Siddhas comprehended observing of Nīti-dharma, Śiva Bhakti, Yoga-siddhi, Svādhyāya, Brahma-Vijñāna and Vishṇu-Bhakti.
4. The Dharma of the Gandharvas had its roots in intense devotion to god and mastery of dance and music and steadfast devotion to Sarasvatī.
5. The Dharma of Vidyādharas lay in the mastery of learning, Vijñāna and Bhakti towards Śiva and Pārvatī.
6. The Dharma of Kiṁpurushas rested in the knowledge of Gandharva-vidyā, devotion to Sūrya and mastery over Arts and Crafts.
7. The Dharma of the Pitṛis embodied Brahmacharya, absence of pride, Yogābhyāsa and power to move at will.
8. The Dharma of Ṛishis comprised Brahmacharya, Japa, Jñāna, Niyama and knowledge of Dharma.
9. The Dharma of the Mānavas constituted Svādhyāya, Brahmacharya, Dāna, Yajña, charity, not oppressing others, compassion, Ahiṁsā, forgiveness, control of the senses, purity both within and without, love of good things in life and devotion to Vishṇu, Śiva, Sūrya and Devī.
10. The Dharma of Yakshas (Guhyaka) is found resolved in the mastery of wealth, enjoyment, study, Śiva worship, egoism, and aggressiveness.

11. The Dharma of Rākshasas was founded in violence towards other women, greed of others' wealth, study, and devotion to Śiva.
12. The Dharma of Piśāchas revealed itself in absence of discrimination, ignorance, impurity and untruth.

These Dharmas of the twelve types of beings indicate their innate nature and tendencies of action and behaviour both as individuals and in society.

After listening to this exposition Sukeśī specifically asked the Ṛishis about the Dharmas of Men. In reply, the Ṛishis take up quite a different topic, viz. giving an account of the creation by Brahmā of the earth as Lotus from the depth of the water and then the geography of the seven continents (Saptadvīpī-bhūgola). The description is the same as in other Purāṇas, viz. seven continents and seven oceans encircling them, as follows:

1. Jambūdvīpa — Lavaṇa Samudra
2. Plakshadvīpa — Ikshurasa Samudra
3. Śālmalidvīpa — Surā Samudra
4. Kuśadvīpa — Ghṛita Samudra
5. Krauñchadvīpa — Dadhi Samudra
6. Śākadvīpa — Kshīra Samudra
7. Pushkaradvīpa — Svādujala Samudra

It is said that life in the Dvīpas from Plaksha to Śāka is peaceful and happy but the seventh namely Pushkaradvīpa is the region of twentyone hells. The names of Narakas are stated thus:

1. Raurava
2. Mahā Raurava
3. Tamisra
4. Andha-Tāmisraka
5. Kālasūtra
6. Apratishṭha
7. Ghaṭīyantra
8. Asipatra
9. Tapta-kumbha
10. Kūṭaśālmali
11. Karapatra
12. Śvāna-bhojana
13. Saṁdaṁśa
14. Lohapiṇḍa
15. Karambha-sikatā
16. Kshāra-nadī
17. Kṛimi-bhojana
18. Vaitaraṇī
19. Śoṇitapūya-bhojana
20. Kshurāgradhārā
21. Saṁśoshaṇa

Ch. 12 describes in detail the various evils or sins that lead to these hells (*Karma-vipāka*). The idea seems to be the enunciation of a three-fold principle for dissuading people from sinful life. Firstly is punishment by the king through civil and criminal laws whereby most of these crimes are retributed. The second method was that of Prāyaśchitta or expiation undertaken out of one's own accord in repentance and to redeem oneself from sins. This was, of course, the best of the three. The third method to keep people off from committing further sins was to keep them in dread of the Nemesis in fear of sufferings, and tortures in the hells.

The Purāṇa writer condemns ungratefulness (*Kṛitaghnatā*) as the worst of all sins for which there is neither adequate punishment nor expiation. In this context a very interesting list of the best amongst the various classes of objects (*Pravara-sūchī*) is given. This is the work of some well-informed writer who must have taken great pains in compiling the list which is worth recording :

	Name of object	*The best one*
1.	Deities	Vishṇu
2.	Mountain	Himālaya
3.	Weapons	Sudarśana Chakra
4.	Birds	Garuḍa
5.	Serpents	Ananta
6.	Elements	Earth
7.	Rivers	Gaṅgā
8.	Water-born objects	Lotus
9.	Asuras	Devotee of Śiva
10.	Kshetras	Kuru Jāṅgala
11.	Tīrthas	Prithūdaka (modern Pehoa in Kurukshetra)
12.	Lakes	Mānasarovara
13.	Forests	Nandana
14.	Lokas	Brahma Loka
15.	Dharma Vidhis	Satya
16.	Yajñas	Aśvamedha
17.	Dear ones	Son
18.	Ṛishis	Agastya
19.	Āgamas	Veda
20.	Purāṇas	Matsya Purāṇa
21.	Smṛitis	Manu Smṛiti

22.	Tithis	Amāvasya
23.	Gods	Indra
24.	Shining ones	Sūrya
25.	Nakshatra	Chandramā
26.	Reservoirs of Waters	Ocean
27.	Rākshasas	Sukeśin
28.	Bonds	Nāga-pāśa
29.	Cereals	Rice (*Śāli*)
30.	Men	Brāhmaṇa
31.	Animals	Cow and Lion
32.	Flowers	Jātī
33.	Cities	Kañchīpurī
34.	Women	Rambhā
35.	Four Āśramas	Householder
36.	Cities	Kuśasthalī
37.	Country	Madhyadeśa
38.	Fruits	Mango
39.	Buds	Aśoka
40.	Herbs	Harītikī
41.	Roots	Bulbous root
42.	Diseases	Indigestion
43.	White objects	Milk
44.	Cloths	Cotton cloth
45.	Arts	Arithmetic
46.	Sciences	Indra-Jāla
47.	Vegetables	Kākamāchī
48.	Flavours	Salt
49.	Fruits	Tāla fruit
50.	Lotus Ponds	Pampā
51.	Foresters	Jāmbavān
52.	Trees	Banian
53.	Learned Men	Śiva
54.	Satī women	Pārvatī
55.	Cows	Kapilā
56.	Fertilizing Males	The Blue-coloured Bull

This list is significant in two ways, firstly, for its specific references, (e. g.) to Madhyadeśa, Kuśasthalī that is Kānyakubja, and Kāñchīpurī, the capital of the Pallavas, and in their period a famous

4

centre of life and culture in the whole of south India. It seems that the fame of Kāñchī had spread in the north when this list was compiled during the 7th century which was the most flourishing period in the history of the Pallavas. At the same time in North India the Maukhari empire with its capital at Kuśasthalī or Kannauja was at the height of its glory ; it is why the Purāṇa writer had included both these great cities of south and north in this list. Another indication is the reference to Kuru Jāṅgala as the best region which points to the Śrīkaṇṭha Janapada which was the seat of Harsha Vardhana and his ancestors who also belong to the 6th-7th century A. D. Although Thāneśvara the capital is not included in this list, there is another equally sacred spot of Kurukshetra which is mentioned, namely Pṛithūdaka (modern Pehoa on the Sarasvatī).

Amongst the deities the first place is given to Vishṇu which is justified by the Bhāgavata affiliation of this Purāṇa. The next noteworthy feature of this list is that it represents the style of a Varṇaka. It is gratifying to see that such a comprehensive Varṇaka of this type is preserved in this Purāṇa. This type of Varṇaka, drawn in the 7th century, may be taken to be the earliest of its kind. In the later Varṇaka literature we find a continuation of this style with some items of the list being retained and some new ones being added. Attention may be drawn to the Varṇakas of this type in Varṇaka-Saṁgraha edited by Dr. Sandesra and Sabhā Śriṁgāra edited by Shri Agar Chanda Nahta.

A third point from a perusal of the above list of "excellent-ones" suggests that such enumeration of the 'best' (Pravara, Mukhya, Śresṭha) from each class obtained in antiquity ; we have a specimen of the same in the Vibhūti Yoga Adhyāya of the Gītā (Ch. 10), where most of the names are the same as in the above list, e. g. Gaṅgā amongst rivers, Ocean amongst reservoirs of water etc.

Ch. 13 presents an account of Jambū Dvīpa, but in reference to a new geographical argument of 9 continents (Nava Varsha), viz. one in the centre named Ilāvṛita and 8 in the cardinal and intermediate directions as follows ;—

1. East — Bhadrāśva
2. South-east — Hiraṇyamān
3. South — Bhāratavarsha
4. South-west — Harivarsha
5. West — Ketumāla
6. North-west — Champakavarsha

7. North — Kuru
8. North east — Kiṁpurusha

Here we find a strange admixture of the original Chaturdvīpi-Bhūgola and the later Saptadvīpi-bhūgola, fused into a new scheme of 9 continents. One may clearly recognise the ancient four continents in the four directions of Suméru, viz. Bhadrāśva Bhāratavarsha, Ketumāla and Uttarakuru. Amongst the rest are some names from the seven continents and some new ones like Champaka.

Nine divisions of Bhāratavarsha—Here begins the geography of Bhāratavarsha proper. In the original geography of 4 continents (Chaturdala Bhū-padma), Bhāratavarsha was the continent in the southern direction. Later, in the second stage, it is changed to one of the seven Varshas of Jambū Dvīpa and placed at its southern-most point and described also as Haimavata Varsha, since the region was marked off from the others by the Himālaya mountain. In the third stage the connotation of the geographical term *Bhārata* underwent a significant change. It happened during the Gupta period. The name *Bhārata* was then the designation not only of India proper but it also included the islands of the Indian ocean, like Ceylon, Andmans, Nikobar, Java, Bali, and Sumatra. These were reckoned as the 9 divisions of Bhārata Varsha, separated from each other by the sea and, therefore. inaccessible by land route :—

यदेतद् भारतं वर्षं नवद्वीपं निशाचर ।
सागरांतरिताः सर्वे अगम्याश्च परस्परम् ।
इन्द्रद्वीपः कशेरूणास्ताम्रपर्णो गभस्तिमान्,
नागद्वीपः कटाहश्च सिंहलो वारुणस्तथा ।
अयन्तु नवमस्तेषां द्वीपः सागर संवृतः,
कुमाराख्यः परिख्यातो द्वीपोयं दक्षिणोत्तरः । (Vn.13.8-11)

The above is an important list mentioning the names of the oceanic islands, desinated as Dvīpāntara in the Golden Age of Indian History, which constituted virtually the cultural centre of Indian civilization. In their religion, art, language, script and philosophy, they were united with the home-land of Bhārata by cultural bonds and for all practical purposes this region of Greater India formed an integral part of India's cultural unity, so that the name of Bhārata denoted all of them, and therefore a name had to be found for the homeland proper. This new name was Kumāradvīpa or Kumārīdvīpa. The

writer, with his locus somewhere in Bhāratavarsha, refers to it as *Ayam*, 'This' (अयन्तु नवमस्तेषाम्). Rājaśekhara in the Kāvya-Mīmāṁsā explains this as Kumarīdvīpa, but the Vāmana Purāṇa states it as Kumāradvīpa. Other Purāṇas also cite verses but they do not correctly identify the ninth Dvīpa and therefore it must be said to the credit of the author of the Vāmana Purāṇa that he is specifically clear in his geographical definitions and of the term Bhārata. In śloka 13.59 the name of Kumaradvīpa is repeated as referring to Bhārata proper. We have pointed out in our commentary on the Matsya Purāṇa that this change of name from Bhārata to Kumāradvīpa or Kumārīdvīpa can still be traced in the present version of the Saṅkalpa :—

हरिॐ श्री ब्रह्मणः द्वितीयपरार्धे श्री श्वेतवाराहकल्पे वैवस्वतमन्वन्तरे अष्टाविंशतितमे कलियुगे कलिप्रथमचरणे जम्बूद्वीपे भरतखण्डे भारतवर्षे कुमारिकाखण्डे आर्यावर्तैकदेशे अविमुक्तवाराणसीक्षेत्रे आनन्दवने भागीरथ्याः पश्चिमे तीरे·················

Here One may still see the two conceptions of Jambūdvīpa-Bhāratakhaṇḍa and Bhāratavarsha-Kumārikā-khaṇḍa juxtaposed for the reason that in popular memory the older geographical reference of Jambūdvīpa-Bhāratavarsha persisted, while Bhāratavarsha-Kumārika-khaṇḍa was introduced after accepting the new geographical change.

The Skanda Purāṇa, in its Māheśvarakhaṇḍa, Kumārikākhaṇḍa maintains that a legendary region was meant by the name Kumārikā. A certain king had eight sons and one daughter and distributed his kingdom in nine parts and gave one to each of them. The sister felt inclined to perform Tapas and as a sign of reuunciation gave away her share to her brothers. Since each had nine sons the brothers divided the kingdom into nine divisions and thus the whole kingdom came in the possession of 72 persons, each of whom owned one division. The names of these 72 parts together with the figures of their land revenue (*Grāma-saṅkhyā*) is recorded in this portion of the Skanda Purāṇa. The country was therefore named after the gracious Sister, Kumārī or Virgin.

The list of the 8 Islands obtaining in the Vāmana and other Purāṇas is as follows.

1. Indradvīpa—Andaman (=Indradyumna)
2. Kaseruka = Kaserumān

3. Tamraparṇa—Ceylon (of the ancient-world)
4. Gabhastimān
5. Nāgadvipa (= Nagnadvīpa)—Nicobar (same as Nakkavaram of the Chola inscriptions)
6. Kaṭāha—Kedah in Malaya Peninsula often referred to in story literature and known as Kaṭakachhadvīpa in the Kathā-sarit-sāgara.
7. Simhala—Ceylon. It shows that Tāmraparṇī of this list should be identified with some other island.
8. Varuṇa—Borneo.

It is stated that on the north-east frontier of Kumāradvīpa lived the Kirāta tribes and on the north-west the Yavanas ; the latter seems to be a historical reference to the Bactrian Greeks who were originally settled in Bactria in the 4th century B. C. but subsequently occupied Gandhāra and the Kabul Valley.

Two more historical names are introduced in the account of the Vāmana Purāṇa, viz. Āndhras in the south and Turushkas in the north. This is a grafting on the two ancient names, and certainly refers to the changed political conditions in about the first or second century A. D., when the Āndhra-Sātavāhana empire stretched between the two oceans in the south and the Turushkas or the Tocharian Śakas ruled in the north at Peshawar. The author then takes up a geographical description of the mountains, rivers and Janapadas of Bhāratavarsha, an old list found traditionally recorded in the other Puraṇas as well but in somewhat greater detail.

Kula-Parvatas—Three types of mountain-ranges are recognised—Kula Parvata, Varsha-Parvata and Vishkambha-Parvata. Kula-parvatas are the chain of hills within the four corners of the country as stated here. Varsha-Parvatas are those that divide and distinguish one Varsha or monsoon-system from the other. There are seven Varsha-Parvatas in Jambūdvīpa separating the seven Varshas. Other Dvīpas are said to have their similar groups of seven Varsha-Parvatas. The Vishkambha or Maryādā-Parvatas were four which demarcated the four continents on the four directions of the central Sumeru mountain. These names should be distinguished in order to evolve a clear geographical conception as expounded by the Purāṇas.

So far as the seven Kula-Parvatas of Bhāratavarsha are concerned, the list is alike in all the Purāṇas, e. g. 1. Mahendra, 2. Malaya, 3. Sahya, 4. Śūktimān (Śaktimān in Vāmana), 5. Ṛiksha Parvata, 6. Vindhya and 7. Pāriyātra. Mahendra is the mountain still known by this name in Ganjām district and identical with the Eastern Ghats. The chain is continued until it mingles with that in the south known as Malaya, which is broken into several parts each having its own name as Nalla-malai, Elā-malai, etc. Sahya is the well known Western Ghat extending from north to south along the sea coast with the strip of land named Konkaṇa (lying to its west, also called Aparānta). Śūktimān is said to be the source of the Sūktimatī river and appears to be the northern extension towards the east of the Sahya mountain represented by the chain of Mahādeva hills and the Ajanta offshoot. The Ṛiksha seems to be the Tableland of Gondwana. The Vindhya is well-known as extending upto Mirzapur. The Pāriyātra should be identified with the Āravallis, lying north-south in Rajasthan. This completes the long chain of hills in the centre, south and west of the Deccan table-land. Besides these, there are some low hills in the eastern part of India and the Great Mountain Ranges System of the Himālayas towering over the entire land from Lohitya to the Hindukush.

The Vāmana, as also some other Purāṇas, speak of other scattered hills of secondary importance, as follows :—

1. Kolāhala, 2. Vaibhrāja, 3. Mandara, 4. Durdhara, 5. Vātadhūma, 6. Vaidyuta, 7. Maināka, 8. Sarasa, 9. Tuṅgaprastha, 10. Nāga, 11. Govardhana near Nasik, 12. Ujjayanta=Girinār or Raivataka mountain 13. Pushpagiri, 14. Arbuda (Abu), 15. Raivata same as Ujjayanta, 16. Ṛishyamūka, 17. Gomanta (Gao), 18. Chitrakūṭa, 19. Kṛitasmara, 20 Srīparvata (=Sri Śaila in Kurnool district) and 21. Konkaṇaka, some of which cannot now be identified.

Rivers—Rivers are classified according to their sources.

1. Rivers rising from the Himālayas—Sarasvatī, Pañcharūpā, Kālindī, Hiraṇyavatī, Śatadru, Chandrikā (=Chandrā), Nīlā, Vitastā, Irāvatī, Kuhu (Kubhā Kabul river), Madhurā, Hārarāvi (probably the same as Harahvaiti in Afghanistan, modern Arghadanb), Uśīrā, Dhātakī, Arasā, Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, Bāhudā, Dṛishadvatī, Niḥsvarā (probably

Niśchīrā or Rāptī), Gaṇḍakī, Chitrā, Kauśikī, Vadhūsarā (a river in Kurukshetra), Sarayū and Lohityā.

The list is far from complete as some important rivers of Bengal, Bihar and Assam are not mentioned,

2. Rivers rising from Pāriyātra—Vedasmṛiti, Vedasini (Vetasini of other texts), Vṛitraghnī, Sindhu (Kālī Sindhu), Parṇāsā (Banas river), Nandinī, Pāvanī, Mahī, Śarā, Charmaṇvatī (Chambal), Lūpī, Veṇumatī, Chitrā, and Oghavatī.

3. Rivers rising from Ṛiksha—Śoṇa, Mahānadī, Narmadā, Surasā, Kriyā, Mandākinī, Daśārṇā, Chitrakūṭā, Devikā Citrotpalā, Tamasā (Tons), Karatoyā, Piśāchikā, Pippalaśreṇī, Vipāśā, Vañjulāvatī, Satsantajā, Śūktimatī, Chakriṇī, Tridivā and Vasu.

4. Rivers rising from Vindhya—Śivā, Payoshṇī, Nirvindhyā, Tāpī, Nishadhāvatī, Veṇā, Vaitaraṇī, Sinībāhu, Kumudvatī, Toyā, Revā, Mahā-Gaurī, Durgandhā, Vāśilā.

5. Rivers rising from Sahya—Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Kṛishṇā, Veṇyā, Saridvatī, Viśamadrī, Suprayogā, Vāhyā, Kāverī, a tributary of Narmadā, Dugdhodā, Nalinī, Vārisenā and Kalasvanā.

6. Rivers rising from Śūktimān—Kṛitamālā Tāmraparṇī, Vañjulā, Utpalāvatī, Śunī, Sudāmā.

The above lists of rivers are not quite correctlyclassified, names of one set anamalously mixed up with those of another. The rivers shown under Śuktimān in the Vāmana in fact belong to the Malaya mountain. If that be the case the list of Śuktimān and of Mahendra are missing and the text appears incomplete.

Janapadas—These names are classified according to the seven divisions of the country as in other Puraṇas :—

1. Madhyadeśa—Kundala, Pañchāla, Kauśika, Vṛika, Śaka, Barbara, Kaurava, Kaliṅga, Vaṅga, Aṅga, Marmaka (probably Śarmaka-Varmaka or the Lichchhavis).

2. Janapadas of Uttarāpatha—Ābhīra, Sadyadhānaka (probably same as Bahu-Dhānyaka of Rohtak, Bāhlīka, Vāṭadhāna, Ābhīra, Kāla-toyada, Aparānta, Śūdra, Pallava, Kheṭaka, Gāndhāra, Yavana, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Bhadraka, Śātadrava

(people of the Sutlej), Lalittha, Pārāvata-mūśika, Māṭhara, Udakadhārā, Kaikeya, Daṁśana, Kamboja, Darad, Barbara, Agna-lokika, Vena, Tushāra, Ātreya, Bharadvāja, Prasthala, Daśeraka, Lampaka (= Lampāka, Laghamana), Tāvakārāma, Chūlika, Alasa, Alibhadra, Kirāta, Tamasa, Karmamārga (probably same as Haṁsa-Mārga), Supārśva, Gaṇaka, Kulūta, Kuhika (= Kuhaka), Chūrṇa, Tūrṇapāda, Kukkuṭa, Māṇḍavya.

3. Janapadas of Prāchya (East)–Aṅga, Baṅga, Madgurava, Svantargiri, Bahirgiri, Pravaṅga, Vāṅgeya, Māṁsāda, Baladantika, Brahmottara, Prāvijaya, Bhārgava, Āṅgeya, Marshaka, Prāgjyotisha, Pṛisadhra, Videha, Tāmraliptaka, Mālā, Magadha, Mānanda,

4. Janapadas of the South—Puṇḍra (correct Pāṅdya), Kerala, Chauḍa, Kulya (same as the people of the sea-coast between Cape Comorin and Setu-bandha, modern Quilon) Jānuka, Mushikāda, Kumārāda, Maha-Śaka, Mahārāshṭra, Māhishika, (same as Mysore), Kaliṅga, Ābhīra, Vaisakya, Araṇya, Śabara, Pulinda, Vindhya-Śaileya, Vaidarbha, Daṇḍaka, Paurika, Sārika, Aśmaka, Bhogavardhana, Naimika, Kundala, Āndhra, Ulida and Nalakāraka.

5. Janapadas of the West—Śūrapāraka, Vāridhāna, Durga Chālīkaṭa, Pulīya, Asinīla, Tāpasa, Tāmasa, Kāraskara, Tubhamin, Nāsikānta, Su-Naramada, Dārukachchha, Sumāheya, Sārasvata, Vatsīya, Surāshṭra, Āvantya and Ārbuda.

6. Janapadas of Vindhya—Kārūsha, Aikalavya, Mekala, Utkala, Uttamarṇa, Daśārṇa, Gopta, Kikaravu, Kośala, Traipura, Khelliśa, Turaga, Tumbara, Vahela, Naishadha, Anūpa, Tuṇḍikera, Vītahotra, Avanti.

7. Janapadas of the mountainous region (Parvatāśrayiṇaḥ)—Nirāhāra, (same as Nagarahāra, modern Jalālābād), Haṁsamārga (modern Hunza). Kupatha, Taṅgaṇa, Khaśa, Kuthaprāvaraṇa, Ūrṇāplushṭa, Suhūhuka (Kabul river), Trigarta (Kullu Kāṅgrā), Kirāta. Tomara and Śaśikhādrika.

Ch. 14 discusses the various Dharmas, viz. the rules of morality universally to be followed by all called *Sāmānya Dharma*, secondly, appertaining to different stations in life as the *Āśrama Dharmas* to be

observed by the Brahmachārin Gṛihastha and others. Thirdly it takes up the topic of Sadāchāra, i. e. obligatory code of conduct to be followed specially by house-holders who form the main-stay of society. This was also known as Śishṭāchāra and other Purāṇas also deal with this topic in detail. The Vāmana Pūrāṇa presents Sadāchāra, with the imagery of tree with Dharma (law) as root, Artha (objectives) as branches, Kāma (impelling-desires) as flowers and Moksha (fulfillment) as fruit.

The Vāmana account of Āchāra includes a complete routine to be followed from rising in the early morning until retiring in the night, after the day's labour. Most of it is based on Manu Smṛiti, (Chapters 2-6), it touches hundreds of miscellaneous items involved in the daily routine, such as rules of health and hygiene, purification, food, clothing, ethical and social conduct, Śrāddha, worship of gods, performance of Sandhyā. It is specifically stated that these rules applied to house-holder :—

एवमाचरतो लोके पुरुषस्य गृहे सतः
धर्मार्थकामसंप्राप्तिः परत्रेह च शोभना (Vn. 14.109)

In the end the rules for Vānaprastha and Saṁnyāsin are also enumerated. The followers of the third Āśrama are called Vaikhānasa, a term which is frequently used in classical Sanskrit literature of the Gupta period. Kālidāsa refers to Kaṇva and the inmates of his hermitage as adherents of Vaikhānasa Dharma.

Chap. 15 accounts how Sukeśin, on being instructed in Dharma by the Munis of Magadha, came back to his city and advised all his followers to abide by this Dharma, specially the following 13 rules of morality known as Sāmānya Dharma : –

1. Ahiṁsā (non-violence), 2. Satya (truth), 3. Asteya (non-stealing), 4. Śaucha (purity), 5. Indriya-saṁyama (control of senses), 6. Dāna (charity), 7. Dayā (compassion) Śānti, 8. Kshānti (for-bearance), 9. Brahmacharya (continence), 10. Amānitva (absence of pride), 11. Śubhā satyā madhurā vāk (true and sweet speech), 12. Satkṛiyārati (devotion to good actions), 13. Sadāchāra (following moral conduct). By the observance of the above ethical code and other Dharmas, the Asuras gained in power and prosperity by which the Devas felt uneasy. The Purāṇa writer even refers to the Asuras as Mahā-Bhāgavatas or devotees of Vishṇu whose moral ideal was the same as that of the Pañcharātra Vaishṇavas.

Since the Asuras began to observe punctiliously the moral code of the Devas, God Sūrya became enraged and with his power hurled the city of the Asuras on the earth. The Asuras prayed to Śiva for succour. Śiva opened his third eye and with its fiery gaze made the Sun-god fall to the ground in the city of Vārāṇasī, here designated as Hari-kshetra, the holy spot of Vishṇu. Sūrya did not find a fixed abode but was lolling between Varaṇā and Asi until Brahmā appeared on the scene and giving to Sūrya the name of Lola (the fickle one) sent him back to his abode and also restored the city of the Asuras to its former place.

A careful study of the above legend, evidently concocted by the Purāṇa writer, will indicate its purpose. The whole plot of the story appears directed to delineating the conflict between the Buddhist and Brahmanical religions. The Munis of Magadha represent the followers of Buddhism who had their strong centre in Magadha where Buddha had attained enlightenment and spent many years in teaching his *Dhamma*, The Asuras represent the followers of Buddhism who observed all the rules of the higher moral order preached by the Buddha and therefore prospered in every way. The other Purāṇas like Vishṇu and Liṅga address the preacher of Jina Dharma as Māyā Moha who deluded the people by his false teaching and his followers were called the Asuras. For example, in the Liṅga Purāṇa it is stated that the Śāstā Māyī revealed to the Asuras scriptures of delusion (Māyā-maya Śāstra), which was equal to 16 lakhs of Ślokas and against the injunctions of the Śrutis and Smṛitis, (Śrauta-Smārta, viruddha) and against the rules of Varṇāśrama stating that heaven and hell exist only on earth and preaching a way of life by which even women went astray (Liṅga Purāṇa 1.71.72-83).

As in the Vāmana Puraṇa so also in the Liṅga, it is the gods Brahmā and Rudra who intervene in this trial of strength in favour of the Brahmanical religion. The locus for this conflict in its most severe form was Vārāṇasī with its powerful Buddhist centre at Sārnāth, and an equally powerful Brahmanical centre at Vārāṇasī. The numerous sealings found during archaeological excavations at Rajghat site of ancient Vārāṇasī indicate that there was a complete reorganization of the Brahmanical institution of religious worship, education and learning. There were collegiate centres devoted to the study of Ṛigveda (Bahvṛicha charaṇa), Sāmaveda, Chhando-

gāḥ, Yajurveda (Charaka-charaṇa), Chatur-Vidya and to all sciences (Sarva-vidya).

According to Yuan Chang there were many Brahmanical temples well organised and famous as centres of learning in the form of Āśramas. Actually from Rajghat, seals of religious import belonging to temples of 4th-5th century have been found ; e.g., of Avimukteśvara, also known as Deva Deva Svāmin, Gabhastīśvara, Śrī Sārasvata, Yogeśvara, Pītakeśvara, Bhṛiṅgeśvara, Batukeśvara, Kalaśeśvara, Kardamaka Rudra, Skanda Rudra, Lolakāditya. Both in the realm of religious worship and in production of literature as well as in the intensive advancement of learning, Vārāṇasī took the leading part in the Bhāgavata movement for the resuscitation and recovery of the *Sanātana Dharma*. Many commentaries on the older texts including the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Vedāṅgas and philosophical works were written at Vārāṇasī or under the leadership of eminent scholars of this place. The importance of Vārāṇasī in the Gupta period is mirrored in the Kāśī Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa. Undoubtedly Vārāṇasī was a celebrated seat of learning from the time of the Jātakas, but during the Gupta period it developed into the most illustrious centre where almost all branches of Brahmanical literature were cultivated.

The Author extends the appellation 'Mahā-Bhāgavata' to the Asuras but that is a term wnich hints at their being followers of Bhagavān Buddha. In the Chaturbhāṇī, the Buddhist Bhikshu are called Bhāgavatas, implying that they were the devotees of Buddha, who was addressed as 'Bhagavān.'

The motif of Lolārka also seems significant. Of all the gods Sūrya was associated with Buddhism, for Buddha was born in the Solar family, and secondly, the Śakas and Kushāṇas who were the supporters of Buddhism for several centuries, were worshippers of Sūrya. With the decline of their power and patronage, Buddhism came to be dislodged from the hold it had gained in Vārāṇasī.

The Vishṇu Purāṇa version is more definite regarding the teacher who deluded the Asuras (as Māyā-Moha) and calls the religion preahced by him as a 'strange medley' of Dharma and Adharma prepositions, of Sat and Asat, of Parmārtha and the reverse of it, of Moksha or the absence of it :—

धर्मायैतदधर्माय सदतन्न सदित्यपि ।
विमुक्तये त्विदं नैतद्विमुक्तिं सम्प्रयच्छति ।।
परमार्थोऽयमत्यर्थं परमार्थो न चाप्ययम् ।
कार्यमेतदकार्यं च नैतदेवं स्फुटंत्विदम् ।। (Vishṇu-P., 3. 18. 9-10)

The above statement reflects how the Brahmanical teachers were puzzled and perplexed by the tenets of Buddhism which presented them a syneratic hotch-potch blending of the two opposite ways to *tertium quid* and from which nothing was clear as to the truth. The Asuras by following the path of Māyā-moha became Arhats. The Māyā-moha teacher is described as wearing red robes (Raktāmbara). The doctrine of Ahiṁsā is extolled as the one cardinal principle of morality preached by Māyā-moha and the same is found in the Vāmana, wherein Ahiṁsā is the foremost amongst 13 dharmas.

The Vāmana records the restless swaying of the Sun-god between the rivers Varuṇā and Asī and his not finding a firm and steady centre. Symbolically, this might well mean that Varuṇā lying close to Sārnāth represents Buddhism and Asi Brahmaṇism. Between them lay Vārāṇasī where both systems received equal patronage and where the age-old conflicts were finally resolved and decided. Sūrya is the symbol of Buddhi or Vijñāna on which the whole philosophy of Buddhism rested ; cf. Vishṇu Purāṇa :—

नैह्याप्तवादा नभसो निपतन्ति महासुराः
युक्तिमद् वचनं ग्राह्यं मयान्यैश्च भवद्विधैः ।। (Vishṇu, 3. 18. 31)

"The teacher instructs the great Asuras that the so-called authoritative scriptures (Āptavāda) do not descend from heaven ; but whatever teaching is in accordance with reason that alone should be acceptable to you." The Vijñānavāda happens to be the corner-stone of Buddhism for challenging the authority of the Śrutis and Smṛitis. But the advocate of Brahmaṇism versed in Vedas easily saw through the proposterous "rationale" of it all, and defending Vedic authority by powerful and convincing counter-arguments, revealed the baseless, unsteady and incoherence of Buddhists and its liability to being easily refuted. The Vijñāna-Sūrya of the Buddhists is thus shown to be instead oscilating and restless (Lolārka) whereas the Vedas as Trayī-Vidyā are symbolised by the Sun in heaven which is fixed and shines for ever. The unsteady Sun on the earth was compared to Buddhist Vijñāna whose authority is fleeting.

The allusion to the sages of Magadha and the Asuras and of Lolārka thus becomes meaningful set in the religio historical Background of the Kushāṇa and Gupta period. (The struggle was ultimately settled in favour of the Brahmaṇical way of life.) ?

Ch. 16. deals with the religious observances prescribed for the rainy season beginning from the 11th day of the bright half of Āshāḍha when Vishṇu goes to sleep along with the Devas to the 11th day of the bright half of Kārtika when Vishṇu reclines in calm repose (Hari Śayana) Day of awakening (Uttam Dvādaśī). [The Vrata is called Aśūnya-śayana, and anyone who observes it is rewarded with perpetual union with his wife as Lord Vishṇu does not become separate from Lakshmī]. The Vrata is observed by imposing a strict regime and discipline of life on one's ownself. Several Tithis are mentioned for the various other gods to go to sleep, e.g. Śiva on the 15th bright day of Āshāḍha and on the 2nd dark Tithi of Śrāvaṇa for Viśvakarmā, the day being known as Śayanī dvitīyā. Another Vrata named Kāla-ashṭamī begins from the 8th Dark day of Bhādrapada to the same tithi in the month of Māgha for a period of six months, but it is continued for another six months from Phālguna to Śrāvaṇa. The Vrata claims especial association with the cult of Śiva.

The four months of the rainy season in the Hindu Calendar year, appear to have a character invoking continuous session of Vrata, Kathā and religious observances. The custom claims almost Vedic antiquity. The Vedic Elders engaged in whole time, continuous Sādhanā during the four months of rains called forth the practice of austere peenances, reciting of scriptures and observance of ritual as prescribed. Travelling then not being convenient, it was enjoined on the monks and mendicnats to stay at one place and continue their spiritual Sādhanā uninterreptedly. Upto now this tradition has continued.

The conception of the Devas going to sleep also has a symbolical meaning. Sūrya is the abode of all the Devas (*Viśvadevya*) and in the rainy season Sun is at the mercy of clouds, its light being interrupted by watery shrouds. This climatic fluctuation was specially noted to accommodate a number of other religious rites. For example, Śrāddha during the month of Āśvina is held sacred to the Pitṛis. The Nine Days (*Navarātra*) of the bright half of Āśvina are deemed sacred to the Great Goddess who is remembered and worshipped as the

vanquisher of the demon Mahishāsura who represents the watery reservoir of Varuṇa as against the Indra's region of light. The four months of rainy season represent the drama of a struggle between the forces of water and fire, in which for a time the Naptunine power are in the ascendency but ultimately the powers of Sūrya triumph.

Ch. 17 deals with an interesting matter namely the production of the various fruits and flower trees under caption of Devodyāna. Several trees and flowers are mentioned as also the corresponding Adhi-devatas-powers presiding over each. The World-Lotus from the navel of Prajāpati was produced in the month of Āśvina (September-October). A special vow known as Akhaṇḍa-Vrata was celebrated in honour of Vishṇu at the time of his rising from sleep with fruits and flowers etc. It is called Akhaṇḍa the continuity of cosmic-rhythm symbolised in the repose and reawakening of Vishṇu.

In this chapter also occurs a Stotra named Vishṇu. Pañjara surely in praise of Vishṇu envisaged as holding the 8 weapons into the 8 directions, thus forming a complete circle for the protection of the devotee :—

(Ashaṭabāhu Pañjara, Vn. 17. 36)

East—Chakra
South—Gadā
West—Lotus
North—Mushala Club
North-east—Bow
South-east—Conch
South-west—Sword, Shield and coat of arm
North-west—Vaijayantī garland and Śrī Vatsa.

This Form of eight-armed Vishṇu is seen riding on Garuḍa. Iconographic representation of this is found for the first time in the Brahmanical sculpture at Mathura during the Kushāṇa period. It is stated that in former times God Śiva had instructed Kātyāyanī in Vishṇu-Panjara Stotra by the potency of which she was able to overcome the demon Mahishāsura. From this cue begins the story of the Devī and her battle with the demons Mahisha and Raktabīja.

The birth of Mahisha is thus described. Two brothers, Karambha and Rambha, went to perform Tapas in the Pañcha Nada country in honour of Mālavata Yaksha, the one by standing in water, the

other by Pañchāgni-Tapana. Karambha was carried away by a Grāha and thereupon Rambha decided to immitate himself into the fire, but was haulted by God Agni who interceing, wanted to bestow on him a boon. The Asura asked for a son who would be invincible in all the three worlds. A strange thing happened then. The Asura came into contact with a she-buffalo who became pregnant, and to her the demon Mahisha was born.

Though the mention of Mālavata Yaksha is new, it is possible that it appertains to one of the four Yaksha shrines of Kurukshetra noted in the Tīrtha-yātrā Parva [(Ch. 81) of the Āraṇyaka-Parva]. In it we find a reference to Muñjavata; Mālavata may well he a variant of the same name, although the Yaksha ¿presiding-over that place is named Ulukhala-Mekhalā.

The birth of Mahishāsura from Mahishī hints at a particular symbolism. Mahishī is the same as Gaurī in the Ṛigveda who also is the female bison (bos-jourus), who stands symbolism the energy of the waters in the ocean of Varuṇa and represents riotous-energy, unharnessed, uncontrolled, and therefore, demoniacal and a terror to the gods.

The deeds of the demon Mahisha and his final undoing at the hands of the Great Goddess receiver elaborate description in the Devī Māhātmya. That story is repeated in this Purāṇa (in Chapters 17-20) and the latter part of the legend in Chaṇḍa-Muṇḍa Vadha (Ch. 55) and in Śumbha-Niśumbha Vadha (Ch. 56). Ch. 17 has a short archaic narration of the birth of Raktabīja.

How Mahisha grew to power and challenging all gods, became oppressive in the three worlds in continued in Ch. 18. Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva and other gods met in a conference to bring about the fall of the demon. Each god contributed a part of his fiery-energy which, mingling into one, appeared as a mountain of Divine lustre :—

तच्चैकतां पर्वतकूट सन्निभं जगाय तेजः प्रवराश्रमे मुने ।
कात्यायनस्याप्रतिमेन तेजसा महर्षिणा तेज उपाकृतं च ॥

(Vn. 18. 7)

From this pile of lustre of gods mingled with the fervour of Ṛishi Kātyāyana was produced Goddess Kātyāyanī-Durgā, having the splendour of a thousand Suns:—

तेनर्षिसृष्टेन च तेजसा वृतं ज्वलत्प्रकाशार्कसहस्रतुल्यम् ।
तस्माच्च जाता तरलायताक्षी कात्यायनी योगविशुद्धदेहा ॥
(Vn. 18. 8).

Every one of the gods contributed his power to her creation; Her face was formed by the power of Śiva; the three eyes by the power of Agni, the 18 hands by the power of Vishṇu, the bust by the power of Indra, her feet by the power of Brahmā. In the three worlds She was known as Kātyāyanī. The gods equipped her with various weapons. The different aspects of Śakti or her prowesses are then described which is similar to that found in Devī-Māhātmya :—

Nidrā, Tṛishṇā, Kṛipā, Kshudhā, Bhaya, Kānti, Śraddhā, Smṛiti, Pushṭi, Kshamā, Chhāyā, Śakti, Lakshmī, Medhā, Kshānti, Māyā (Vn. 18, 19-20, see also Devī-Māhātmya 5. 12-32 34). Thus equipped, the goddess came to the Vindhya mountain who had bent low in the presence of Ṛishi-Agastya.

The episode of the Vindhya mountain bending itself low before Agastya is related in a short inset here. By his great height Vindhya obstructed the heavenly-course of Sūrya who therefore approached Ṛishi Agastya for help. The Ṛishi came to Vindhya who in reverence to the teacher bowed before him, and was asked to remain in that posture until Agastya returned from the south. A quasi-historical reference is evidently intended here of the crossing of the Vindhya mountain and the Daṇḍaka forest by Ṛishi Agastya marking the first emigration of the Aryans to the south. It is a fact of cultural history that Ṛishi Agastya arrived in the Deccan and fixed his hermitage on the Podigai hills (Ptolemy's geography mentions this as 'Bettigs'), and staying there worked for the cause of Tamil Academy.

The goddess of the Mountain—Vindhya-Vāsinī Mahādevī—is described in her beautiful form at length in Ch. 19, occasionaly employing the imagery and poetry of Kālidāsa in his description of Pārvatī (Kumāra Sambhava, Canto 1.)]. Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa reported to their chief Mahishāsura the Lady of Beautiful Form living in the Vindhya. Thereupon, Mahisha ordered his chief Chaṇḍa, Muṇḍa, Biḍalāksha, Kapila, Baskala, Ugrāyudha, Vikshur, and Raktabīja to march against the goddess of the Vindhya hills. (cf. also, Devī-Māhātmya). Dundubhi, son of Maya, was deputed as the mesanger of Mahisha. Duṇdubhi reached the presence of the goddess and spoke to her about the invincible might of Mahisha and also delivered his message of

love. Thereupon the goddess smiled and said that according to the custom of her family she could be gained only by one who had power in him.

> किंत्वस्ति दैत्येश कुलेऽस्मदीये धर्मो हि शुल्काख्य इति प्रसिद्धः ।
> तं चेत्प्रदद्यान्महिषो ममाद्य भजामि सत्येन पतिं ह्यारिम् ॥
> कुलेऽस्मदीये शृणु दैत्य शुल्कं कृतं हि यत्पूर्वतरैः प्रसह्य ।
> यो जेष्यतेऽस्मत्कुलजां रणाग्रे तस्याः पतिः सोऽपि भविष्यतीति ॥

(Vn. 19. 30., 33).

The gods were anxious about her safety since the goddess was unprotected by any cost of arm ; but Śiva had conferred on the goddess the potent protective-charm, Vishṇu-Pañjara Stotra, already described (Ch. 17. 26-34). The goddess killed the demon Mahisha.

The death of Mahishāsura is retold in greater detail in Ch. 20. It is stated that the event happened in the beginnig of divine creation (Deva-yugasyādau, Vn. 20.3). The theme is the same that of Daivāsuram, the mending tend between the Devas and the Asuras, revived at all times and at all places, in which even and anon the gods turn out victorious against the might of the Asuras. Here in the case of Mahisha it is the Devī or the Dynamic Female Energy of the Gods that brings the Asuras under her subjection.

In her fight the Devī is attended upon and accompanied by a member of lessen power or elemental forces, e.g. the various fabulous beings having the heads of tiger, wolf, horse, buffalo, boar, mouse, cock, bull, goat, sheep and other weird forms, eyes and feet (Vn. 20. 17-19). Such lists of Gaṇas, Bhūtas, Rākshasas presenting dwarfish, grotesque, fabulous and mythical form occur in several Purāṇas. For example, Matsya (154. 524-545), Padma (Sṛishṭi Khaṇḍa 40. 476-496), Liṅga (1.103. 13-34), Harivaṁśa (2.109. 63-84), Vāyu (101.250. 264), Brahma (213.93-99), Vishṇu Dharmttara (1.69.6-8), Kishkindhākāṇḍa (4.15-21), Anuśāsana Parva (14.140-165). They present an interesting study in elements of the hideous and the terrible in Indian mythology and Art. They are mostly referred to as the Pramathas or Gaṇas of Śiva-Rudra, Gaṇeśa and the other god.

This iconographic interest is to note that from the severed head of the buffalo demon issues forth a person holding a sword, as also stated in the Devī Māhātmya :—

एवमुक्त्वा समुत्पत्य सारुढ़ा तम महासुरम् ।
पादेनाक्रम्य कंठे च शूलेनैनमताडयत् ॥
तत्सोपि पदाक्रान्तस्तया निजमुखात्ततः ।
अर्धनिष्क्रान्त एवासीद् देव्या वीर्येण संवृतः ॥
अर्धनिष्क्रान्त एवासौ युध्यमानो महासुरः ।
तया महासिना देव्या शिरश्छित्वा निपातितः ॥

(Devī Māhātmya 3. 37-39).

This particular posture of the demon emerging in half-human form from the half-several throat of the animal, pierced by the spear of the goddess is a pecularity of images seen only in the Gupta period for the first time. There are quite a number of images of Mahishāsura-mardinī of the Kushaṇa period in the Mathura School of Sculpture, in all of which the buffalo demon is represented as an animal trampled upon by the goddess but in some of them the demon is shown with his throat severed. It appears therefore that the present reference points to the Gupta or later Gupta period as the time of the composition of this varsion of the legend which is of poor quality and seems to be a recast of the version of the Devī-Māhātmya (See my book 'The Glorification of the Great Goddess, Preface p. vii).

Ch. 21 opens with the question of Nārada about other incarnations of the Great Goddess to which Pulastya replied as follows :— For slaying the demons Śumbha and Niśumbha the goddess was born as Kauśikī. She was produced from the sheath of Pārvatī and became known as Kauśikī. Here several questions are asked about the birth of Pārvatī in the house of Himālaya and of the birth of Skanda These are elaborate legends given in the Matsya and other Purāṇas but here only briefly touched upon. In this version we find that Śiva himself commanded the Gaṇa army (after the death of his wife Satī) but after some time he relinquished the office and retired into meditation. Without Śiva the gods were soon overpowered by Niśumbha. Helpless, they approached Vishṇu in Śvetadvīpa who advised them thus :

There is Menā in Prithūdaka, in the region of Kurukshetra, the beautiful daughter of the Agni-shvātta Pitṛis. You should propitiate her to become the consort of Lord of Himālaya ; to them will be born a daughter named Pārvatī, an incarnation of Daksha's daughter Satī. She will be wedded to Śiva and from their union will be born a son who will defeat the Asuras,

Here the story takes a new turn. The Devas questioned about the holiness of Kurukshetra, Prithūdaka and of the sacred day on which one should worship in Kurukshetra. First the story of king Saṁvaraṇa, son of Ṛiksha who lived in Kṛitayuga and of his marriage with Tapatī, daughter of Sūrya is related. Saṁvaraṇa entrusting his kingdom to the care of Ṛishi Vaśishṭha went out on his horse for enjoying in the Vaibhrāja forest and there he saw the beautiful maiden named Tapatī. He was stricken with love for her and then Ṛishi Vaśisṭha interceded with Sūrya for bestowing his daughter Tapatī for marriage with Saṁvaraṇa. The request was granted and the two were married.

The story is meaningful in this context, since out of the union of Tapatī and Saṁvaraṇa was born king Kuru after whom the place is named as Kurukshetra.

Kuru was a famous ancestor in the line of the Bharatas. He is said to have been married to princess Saudāminī. Kuru was anointed king by his father who retired to the forest. Kuru during the course of his wandering went to the Dvaita-vana and there came across the river Sarasvatī, daughter of Brahmā and rising from its source in Plaksha. There Kuru built a large lake by accummulating the waters of Sarasvatī and took his bath in it.

तत्र देवीं ददर्शाथ पुण्यां पापविमोचिनीम्
प्लक्षजां ब्रह्मणः पुत्रीं हरिजिह्वां सरस्वतीम् ॥
सुदर्शनस्य जननीं ह्रदं कृत्वा सुविस्तृतम्
तस्यास्तज्जलमासाद्य स्नात्वा प्रीतोऽभवन्नृपः ॥

(Vn. 22. 13-14).

He then went to the Uttara Vedi of Brahmā's sacrifice named Syamanta-pañchaka.

The mention of the Uttara Vedi, Northern Sacrificial Altar, raises the question about other Vedis and we are informed that Prayāga is the Madhyama Vedi, Gayā-Śīrsha the eastern, Virajā-kshetra the southern Vedi and Pushkara, the western Vedi. At these four points Brahmā had performed his great sacrifices. Pushkara, Prayāga, Gayā and Virajā (Jajpur on the Vaitaraṇī river in Orissa), these are the focal points in the belt of Madhya Deśa extending from Rajasthan to the eastern ocean. The significance of the word Uttara-Vedi for Syamanta-pañchaka in Kurukshetra on the banks of Sarasvatī also

should be understood. Kurukshetra appears to have been the centre whence Aryan culture spread forth ; and the various Dhishṇyā fires extending along the banks of rivers commenced from the Sarasvatī and proceeded in different directions along the 16 great rivers mentioned in the Matsya Purāṇa (Ch. 61). Therefore Sarasvatī was accepted in ancient tradition as the Uttara-Vedi and the four subsequent centres of civilization as other Vedis noted above. It was the deification of the motherland in terms of Yajña and an important reference for these cultural centres to be called Vedis or altars is preserved in the Vāmana Purāṇa.

प्रयागो मध्यमा वेदिः पूर्वा वेदिर्गयाशिरः
विरजा दक्षिणा वेदिरनन्तफलदायिनी
प्रतीची पुष्करा वेदिस्त्रिभिः कुण्डैरलंकृता

(Vn. 22. 18-19).

The story then continues that, King Kuru prepared a ploughshare of gold and yoked Śiva's Nandī Vṛisha to it and ploughed the field of Kurukshetra. Indra appeared before the king and enquired what he was doing. Kuru replied that he was cultivating the eight-fold ethical conduct of Truthfulness, Penance, Compassion, Purity, Charity, Yoga and Continence or Sense-restraint :—

राजाऽब्रवीत्सुरवरं तपः सत्यं क्षमां दयाम्
कृषामि शौचदाने च योगं च ब्रह्मचारिताम्

(Vn. 22. 24-25).

Indra asked where he wanted to sow the seed but did not wait for an answer ; like the Jesting Pilate Indra laughed at this and went his way :—

तं चोवाच हरिर्देवः कस्माद्बीजं नरेश्वर।
लब्धं त्वयेति सहसा ह्यवहस्य गतस्ततः ॥

(Vn. 22. 25-26).

Indra being gone, the king continued his labours in ploughing the area of 7 Krośas in extent which seems to have been the *Parikramā* of Samanta-pañchaka.

Then Vishṇu appeared before Kuru and asked the same question as to his action. Kuru replied again that he was cultivating the Ashṭāṅga-Mahā-Dharma, i. e. the eight-fold great Law comprising the above cardinal principles of morality. Vishṇu asked the king

where he would find the seed for his field ; the king, rising to his lofty stature, replied that the seed of his Mahā-Dharma existed within his body. Vishṇu asked for that seed saying that the king should plough the land and that He, as Nārāyaṇa, would sow the seed :—

ततो मयाऽस्य गदितं नृप बीजं क तिष्ठति
स चाह मम देहस्थं बीजं तमहमब्रुवम्
देह्यहं वापयिष्यामि सीरं कृषतु वै भवान्

(VN. 22. 28-29)

Thereupon, the king extended his right hand as the seed of eight-fold Dharma and Vishṇu divided this by his Chakra into a thousand parts. Then the king extended his left arm with the same result and thereafter his two thighs when, finally the king offered his own head. Vishṇu, pleased with the king's exalted sacrifice, offered him a boon. Kuru desired that the ground tilled by him under his plough be henceforth known as Dharma-kshetra-Kurukshetra :—

यावदेतन्मया कृष्टं धर्मक्षेत्रं तदस्तु वः (Vn. 22.33)

This is an original explanation of the epithet 'Dharmakshetra' afforded by the brilliant author of the Vāmana Purāṇa. There are several implications involved in it, the foremost being the Ashṭāṅgika Dharma of the Bhāgavatas, the seed of which had been sown by Nārāyaṇa Himself, aimed to counter the eight-fold path (Aṭṭhāṅgika Dharma or the Arya or Atthaṅgika Magga of Buddhism) which was mainly an ethical religion. A similar exposition of the Ashṭāṅgika Dharma of the Bhāgavatās is presented in Matsya Purāṇa (Ch. 145. 34). The Bhāgavata teachers, inspired by the high ideals of the Buddhist eightfold path appear to have attempted the creation of a similar pattern of behaviour for the Bhagavata adherents also.

This is also another reason why Kurukshetra was selected as the 'field' for the sowing of the seed of such an exalted Dharma. Religious tradition tells us that the high doctrines of the Bhagavadgītā were propounded at this very place—Holy Kurukshetra—by Kṛishṇa unto Arjuna. The ethical teaching of the Bhagavadgītā emphasises the importance of the house-holder's life in which the prescribed actions must be performed, obeying the injunctions of Śāstras. The Gītā view of life was therefore known as Kuru-Dharma, i.e. the Dharma of the Kuru country. The ideal of this Dharma is explained in the 'Kuru Dhamma Jātaka' where 11 representatives from the different grades of

society ranging from the highest minister to a courtesan seek to attain to this ideal of moral perfection, explain their point of view and approach moral rectitude merely by performing their respective duty (Kuru-Dhamma Jātaka, Vol. III). This is the basic philosophy of detachment as explained in the Bhagavadgītā. Pāṇini in his Ashṭādhyāyī refers to the traditional way of life amongst the house-holders of the Kuru country as Kuru Gārhapatam (VI. 2.42) and it appears that the spirit underlying the ideal ol Kuru Gārhapata, (path of the Gṛiha-patis) Kuru Dhamma and of the Ashṭāngika Mahā-Dharma of the Vāmana was one and the same and inspired by the same ideals of common-sense morality.

At the end of the chapter is a small inset giving the names of the guardian deities of Kurukshetra. We know from the Āraṇyaka Parva that there was an ancient tradition of the Yaksha cult of Kurukshetra comprising Machakruka, Arantuka, Ulūkhala-Mekhalā and Tarantuka. These were the four holy shrines situated in and around Kurukshetra, famous as centres of folk-worship. That śloka of the Mahābhārata is repeated here also :—

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरं यदन्तरं रामह्रदस्य पञ्चकात् ।
एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकं पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥ (Vn. 22. 60).

But in additon to the four ancient Yakshas of Kurukshetra a new version of the guardian deities of that place is now added. For example, Chandra as Yaksha, Vāsuki as Nāga, Śaṅkukarṇa as Vidyādhara, Sukeśa as Rākshas, Ajavana as king, Mahādeva as Agni. In the centre of Kurukshetra is Prithūdaka (modern Pehoa) on the bank of the Sarasvatī. It was the holiest spot in Kurukshetra where all the other Tīrthas came to reside.

Another motif is introduced about the holy character of Kurukshetra. It is stated that between the two rivers named Sarasvatī and Dṛiśadvati lies the area of Kuru Jāṅgala where Sūta Lomaharshaṇa was questioned about the sanctity of the Prithūdaka lake and of the other tīrthas there as well as the birth of Vāmana. The holy pond at Prithūdaka formed by the Sarasvatī is mentioned as Brahma Saras. It is stated that the sacred pond at Prithūdaka was the place where the Yaksha Arantuka was installed.

The name of the lake was Sannihita, and its four corners are given as Viśveśvara, Hastipura, Kanyā Jaradgavī and Oghavatī the last

being the name of a small affluent of the Sarasvatī on which Pṛithūdaka was situated.

विश्वेश्वराद्धस्तिपुरं तथा कन्या जरद्गवी ।
यावदोघवती प्रोक्ता तावत्संनिहितं सरः ॥ (Vn. 22. 53).

The same geographical situation is repeated in Vāmana 58.115.

तमाह विष्णुर्व्रजतीर्थवर्यं पृथूदकं पापहरं कुमार ।
स्नात्वौघवत्यां हरमीक्ष्य भक्त्या भविष्यसे सूर्यसमप्रभावः ॥ (Vn. 58. 115).

The Sannihita pond, Viśveśvara shrine and the Sarasvatī are said to be within a distance of half a *Yojana* from one another.

विश्वेश्वराद्देववरात्पावनी च सरस्वती ।
सरः सन्निहितं प्रोक्तं समन्तादर्द्धयोजनम् ॥ (Vn. 22. 55).

The Sannihita pond is glorified as the place where Brahmā first started his creation, where Vishṇu discharges obligation of maintaining it and where Śiva by taking a dip in its waters became transformed as Śiva Liṅga, the Sthāṇu. It was known in the beginning as the sacrificial-altar (Vedī of Brahmā); then it was known as Rāma-hrada, i. e. the pond created by Paraśurāma ; later on, it was ploughed by Kuru and came to be known as Kurukshetra.

Pṛithūdaka or Pehoa is 14 miles west of Kurukshetra. With Kurukshetra as the focus a number of Tīrthas were situated all round in that region. What exactly was defined as the region of Kurukshetra was the area between Sarasvatī and Dṛishadvatī :—

दक्षिणेन सरस्वत्या दृषद्वत्युत्तरेण च ।
ये वसन्ते कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे ॥ (Āraṇyaka-parva. 81.175).

Within this boundary were a number of sacred places. For example, Puṇḍarīka (modern Pundri), Sarpadevī (modern Safidon), Kapisthala (modern Kaithal), Pṛithūdaka (modern Pehoa) Sthāṇu vaṭa (modern Thaneswar), Phalakt-vana (modern Pharal on the Oghavatī, 17 miles south-east of Thaneswar).

It appears that the boundaries of Kurukshetra were defined by four Yaksha shrines known the guardian deities (Dvārapāla) of Kurukshetra. All of them formed part of the big Kshetra-Parikramā which started from Arantuka mentioned as a Tīrtha on the Sarasvatī sacred to a king of the Yakshas ;—

ततो गच्छेत राजेन्द्र द्वारपालमरन्तुकम्
यच्च तीर्थं सारस्वतं यक्षेन्द्रस्य महात्मनः (Āraṇyaka P.83.52)

This was a shrine in Pṛithūdaka from where the pilgrimage started..

रन्तुकं च नरो दृष्ट्वा द्वारपालं महाबलम्
यक्षं समभिवाद्यैव तीर्थयात्रां समारभेत् (Vn. 34. 11)

It has already been stated in Vāmana 22.51 that the Yaksha Arantuka had its shrine in Pṛithūdaka near the Sannihita pond. This then gives us a fixed point from where the Parikramā of Kurukshetra started.

2. The second Dvārapāla Yaksha was named Tarantuka according to the Vana Parva and the Vāmana also (Vn. 22. 60) but Rantuka only in Vāmana (Vn. 34. 24) :—

तत्र द्वितीयं संपूज्य द्वारपालं प्रयत्नतः
ब्राह्मणान् भोजयित्वा च प्रणिपत्य क्षमापयेत् (Vn. 34. 24).

The exact location of Tarantuka is not given but there is a place named Taraori near Karnal and that may be identified with Tarantuka. The location of second Dvārapāla Yaksha would be on the eastern side and would agree quite well with the course of the Parikramā which had a start from Pehoa in the north.

3. The third Dvārapāla Yaksha is named Kapila, but only as a subsidiary figure to his wife, the great Yakshī Ulūkhala-Mekhalā whose shrine was the most famous of all and visited by female pilgrims from outside also. The Vāmana Purāṇa provides a reliable hint for locating the place of this Yakshī when it says that the same was near Pauṇḍarīka and Muñjavata. Here Pauṇḍrīka (also called Puṇḍarīka) is the well known place now known as Pundri which would be the southern point on the Parikramā-mārga. Ulūkhala-Mekhalā is also mentioned as the Yakshī of Kurukshetra in the list of Yakshas in Mahā-Māyurī.

4. The name of the fourth Yaksha or Dvārapāla deity of Kurukshetra is given as Machakruka in the Mahābhārata but changed to Pañchaka in the Vāmana (Vn. 22.60) and also confused as Rantuka (Vn. 35. 37) :—

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरं रामह्रदानां मचक्रुकस्य च।
एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकं पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥
(Āraṇyaka 83. 208 ; Vn. 22. 60)

The identification of the fourth Dvārapāla Yaksha cannot be determined, but most probably it was located at a place named Jakhala in the west of the Kurukshetra region. It is exactly the point where the western Yaksha shrine should have been located on the Parikramā-mārga. The topography of Kurukshetra is given in some detail both in Āraṇyaka Parva and in Vāman Purāṇa in the subsequent chapters and requires local investigation, with reference to the route taken by the pilgrims at the present time.

Ch. 23 relates the story of Vishṇu's incarnation as Vāmana who is said to have taken birth and resided in Kurukshetra. Hiraṇya-kaśyapa was the ancestor of the Asuras. His son was Prahlāda, his son was Virochana and his son was Bali.

Bali was a virtuous king who ruled according to *Dharma*. Goddess Lakshmī was pleased with him and came to reside in his kingdom. Along with Lakshmī came other goddesses and Divine Graces such as Modesty (*Hrī*), Glory (*Kīrti*), Lustre (*Dyuti*), Radiance (*Prabhā*), Firmness of Will (*Dhṛiti*), Forgiveness (*Kshamā*), Power (*Śakti*), Prosperity (*Ṛiddhi*), Intelligence (*Mahāmati*), Learning (*Śruti*), Knowledge (*Vidyā*), Memory (*Smṛiti*), Equanimity (*Śānti*), Growth (*Pushṭi*), Action (*Kriyā*) (Vn. 23. 19-20). Thus Bali who is here called a *Brahma-vādin* became the master of the three worlds.

The Devas headed by Indra approached the Divine Mother Aditi performing Tapas on Meru and related to her their distress. She told them that the Asura king could not be conquered by anyone excepting Nārāyaṇa and also gave the advice that they should consult their father Prajāpati Kaśyapa, son of Marīchi :

यः स्रष्टा सर्वलोकानां प्रजानां पतिरुत्तमः ।
आत्मभावविशेषेण तृतीयोऽयं प्रजापतिः ।।
(Vn. 24. 12)

Kaśyapa hearing the tale advised them to go to Brahmā whereupon the Devas proceeded to *Brahma-Sabhā* in *Brahma Loka*. A brilliant description of *Brahma-Sabhā* is given with the following motifs.

1. It was resounding with the Sāman Songs chanted by the Sāmagas. The Ṛigvedic teachers of the Bahvṛicha School proficient in *Krama* and *Pada* recitation were present there.

2. Adepts in Yajñas (*Yajña-vidyā Veda-vidaḥ*), as detailed in the Yajurveda, were present in that assembly.

7

3. Priests learned in the Mantra recitation in the Yajñas (*Yajña-Saṁsatava-vidaḥ*),

4. Adepts in Śikshā, Chhandas and other Sciences. It is also stated that philosophers of Lokāyata doctrine were also present there. An interesting list of the different sciences, sages. seers and divine powers present in the assembly of Brahmā, is given, e.g. all the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, the 10 Ṛishis, Daksha and Prāchetasa, the Pañcha-Mahā-bhūtas, Mahat, Ahaṅkāra, Pañcha-tan-mātrās, Avyakta Prakṛiti and Lokapālas, Yajñas, Tapas, Saṅkalpa, Prāṇa, Dharma, Artha, Kāma, Krodha, Harsha, Nava Grahas, Maruts, Viśvakarmā, Vasus, Sūrya, Chandramas, Ahorātra, Ardha-māsa, Māsa, Ṛitus and all other Brahmarshis and Maharshis. The gods with Ṛishi Kaśyapa at their head came to such an assembly of Prajāpati Brahmā.

The gods presented themselves before Brahmā who reading their minds and knowing their predicament, said that God Nārāyaṇa was their ultimate refuge but that he would grant a boon to Kaśyapa and Aditi. The latter requested that Vishṇu be born as their son. Brahmā granted this.

Thereafter all the gods waited upon Vishṇu in Śvetadvīpa on the shore of the Kshīroda Sea and reaching that place extolled Nārāyaṇa by a Vedic Stotra, recited by Kaśyapa.

Ch. 26 gives the text of the *Stotra* which is in prose and consists of a long string of epithets in praise of the Great Lord.

A prose Stotra with the string of epithet is a distinctive style with two other examples, viz. Stotra of Vishṇu by Nārada comprised of 171 epithets (Moksha Dharma Parva, Ch. 325.); and another Pṛithivī Stotra to Bhagavān Vishṇu in the Vishṇu Smṛiti consisting of 100 epithets (Vishṇu Smṛiti, Jolly Edition, Ch. 98, pp. 203-206). These three Stotras are of the nature of *Namaḥ-Stotra* to Vishṇu modelled after the various *Namaḥ-Stotras* of Śiva. A comparative study of these three shows many common epithets.[1]

But what is more revealing is that this style of Prose *Namaḥ-Stotra* was also a part of the Mazadea religion in Sassanian Iran. We find some very long list of titles and excellences of Ahur Mazda given

1. Abhagna Parisaṅkhyāna (Discerner and most discerner), Phenapāchārya (Drinkers of the bubbling form of Soma Juice).

in the Dīn-kart, II. 81, 330 (Casartelli, Philosophy of the Mazdayasnian Religion under the Sassanids, p. 23). The Yasht dedicated to Ahurmazda enumerates 74 honorific epithets conferred upon him (Dhalla, Ancient Iranian literature, p. 48). What is surprising is that a number of epithets in the Nārada Stotra, which, by the way, is repeated in the Vishṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa (III. 350), are inspired by Iranian thought. For example Ṛita Dhāmanā (holy order), Vasu-prada (giver of Vasu, good things), Suprajāpati (Ahur Mazda) as Creator, Loka-Sākshin (Looker on of the world), Mahā-Prajāpati (Greatest Ruler) Ūrjaspati (giver of strength), Bhāsura and Mahā-Bhāsura (Ahur-Mazda dwelling in endless light, Asnari roshano) Sapta Mahā-bhāsura (Seven Ameshaspandas) Saṁjñasaṁjñya (conscious state emerging from the unconscious, i. e. Hudaongha from Anāmānthvāo) Yamya and Mahayamya (Avestan yima kshaeta), Yajña-sambhava (Of a thousand yajñas), Manaspati (Mainu paeti), Amṛita (Amesha). In a passage from Vendidad (Fargrd. 2. 1.) 20 names of Ahur-mazda are given (Bharucha, Zoroastrian Religion and Custom, pp. 147-151). Originally there were one thousand names of Ahurmazda i. e. a Sahasranāma stotra, of which only 101 remained as found in the editions of Vendidad, Sadeh (Cassertelli, ibid. p. 26, Footnote).

One of the most significant names found in the Nārada Stotra is Hari-medha which was a Sanskrit form of Ahur-mazda. The Vishṇu Smṛiti and the Nārada Stotra give the epithet Chitra-śikhaṇḍa-dhara or Chitra-Śikhaṇḍin which was based on the conception of the Seven Chitra-Śikhaṇḍin Munis mentioned in the Nārāyaṇīya Parva as the name for the Seven Ameshaspandas. Ahur-mazda was called the Source of Harmonies which correspond to the epithet Sāmika Vrata-dhara for Vishṇu in the Nārada Stotra. Iranian Ahu is also called Chitra which was Sanskritised as Chitra. The two epithets Pavitra and Mahā-Pavitra are true to Ahurmazda, also regarded as Holy of the Most Holies (Bharucha, ibid., p. 148). Iranian Ahu or Vedic Asu is known as Ahu Anāmānthvāo, equal to Sanskrit *Avijñeya*, the One Unknowable. The Śānti Parva refers to these names in the Nārada Stotra as secret ones, Guhya-nāma (326.1.), which was also the belief amongst the Sassanians about the names of Ahur-mazda (Dhalla, Ibid. p. 50 ; see also Ahur-mazda and his name, Madressa Vol. p. 77-83.)

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF EPITHETS IN THE PROSE STUTI OF VISHṆU BY KAŚYAPA

[Vāmana Purāṇa Ch. 26]

१. अनादि संभव
२. अनादि मध्यनिधन
३. अमृतशय
४. अक्षय
५. अक्षर
६. अरूप
७. अग्रज
८. अग्र्य
९. अज सहस्र शिराः
१०. अयोमुख
११. आदिवर्ण
१२. आदित्य तेजः
१३. आदिदेव
१४. अमृत
१५. अनन्तकर्मवंश
१६. अश्वमेधः
१७. इज्यः
१८. ऊर्ध्वकर्मन्
१९. एकशृङ्ग
२०. कपिल
२१. खण्डपरशु
२२. गभस्तिनाथ
२३. घर्मः
२४. घृतार्चिः
२५. चरम
२६. चन्द्ररथ
२७. त्रिधामन्
२८. त्रिनयन
२९. तुषित
३०. दाता
३१. दीक्षितः
३२. दक्षिणा
३३. दिवस्पति
३४. द्यौः
३५. ध्रुव
३६. धर्मज
३७. धनञ्जय
३८. धर्मज्ञ
३९. धर्मनाभ
४०. धाता
४१. निजजय
४२. नेता
४३. नारायण
४४. परमयज्ञ
४५. पृश्नितेजः
४६. पद्मनाभः
४७. पुरुषोत्तम
४८. पुष्पहास
४९. पोता
५०. पतिः
५१. पुरुष
५२. पुरुषोत्तम
५३. प्रभाकर
५४. पवित्र
५५. प्राग्वंशधीः
५६. बहुरूप
५७. ब्रह्मशय
५८. ब्राह्मणप्रिय
५९. भूवन्द्य
६०. भूतनाथ
६१. भृगुपुत्र
६२. भूविक्रम
६३. भूतादि
६४. महातत्त्व
६५. मुञ्जकेश
६६. महादक्षिण
६७. महानियमधर
६८. महापुरुष
६९. मखेषु प्राशिता
७०. मातरिश्वा
७१. मन्ता
७२. मोक्ष
७३. महाभूत
७४. योग
७५. रुद्र
७६. लोकनाथ
७७. लोकप्रतिष्ठ
७८. वृषसिन्धु
७९. वृषाकपि
८०. विष्वक्सेन
८१. वैकुण्ठ
८२. वृषावर्त
८३. विरिञ्चि
८४. विरजः
८५. वौषट्
८६. वषट्कार
८७. वेदवेद्य
८८. विश्व
८९. विश्वभूत
९०. विश्वगोप्ता

९१. विश्वभव	९९. सुरवृष	१०७. सहस्रमूर्ति
९२. वाचस्पति	१००. सर्वभूतपति	१०८. सहस्रास्य
९३. वरद	१०१. सनातन	१०९. सहस्रसम्भव
९४. शुचिश्रवस्	१०२. सूक्ष्म	११०. सहस्रधार
९५. शक्र	१०३. सूर्यतेजस्	१११. सुभाण्ड
९६. शतक्रतुनाथ	१०४. सहस्रशिरस्	११२. सुमेधस्
९७. शतधार	१०५. सहस्रद	११३. समिधः
९८. शम्भु	१०६. सहस्रबाहु	

महाभारते मोक्षधर्मपर्वणि ३२५ अध्याये विष्णुस्मृतौ च नारदकृता विष्णुस्तुतिः :—

१. अनन्त, (वि० स्मृ०), २. अमृत, ३. अपरिनिमित (वि० स्मृ० ४. अपराजित (वि० अजित) ५. अमृतेशय, ६. अग्निरास्य, ७. अग्निः, ८. अप्रतक्र्य (वि० अचिन्त्य) ९. अविज्ञेय, १०. अथर्वशिरः, ११. अभग्नयोग, १२. अभग्नपरिसंख्यान, १३. अनन्तगते, १४. अनन्तभोग, १५ अनन्त (वि०) १६. अनादे (वि०) १७. अमध्य, १८. अव्यक्तमध्य, १९. अव्यक्तनिधन, २०. अज, २१. अग्राह्य, २२. अचल, २३. अप्रतर्क्य, २४. अविज्ञेय, २५. आभासुर, २६. आहुतिः, २७. आद्यचक्षुः २८. आखण्डल, २९. ऊर्जस्पते (वि०) ३०. ऋतधामन्, ३१. एकान्तदर्शनाय, ३२. ओङ्कार, ३३. कायिक, ३४. कुशेशय, ३५. कौशिक, ३६. कीर्त्यावास, ३७. क्षेत्रज्ञ, ३८. गताध्वन्, ३९. चतुर्महाराजिक, (वि०) ४०. चन्द्रमाः, ४१. चित्रशिखण्डिन्, (वि०) ४२. च्छिन्नतृष्ण, ४३. च्छिन्नसंशय, ४४. जगत्पते, ४५. जगदन्वयः, ४६. जगत्प्रकृतिः ४७. ज्येष्ठसामग, ४८. त्रिगुण, ४९. त्रिणाचिकेत, ५०. तुषित (वि०) ५१. तपोवास, ५२. देवदेव, ५३. दिवस्पते, ५४. वेदेशय, ५५. दिशांगज, ५६. दिक्स्पते, ५७. दिग्भानो, ५८. दिक्पते, (वि०) ५९. निष्क्रिय, ६०. निर्गुण, ६१. निवृत्तधर्मप्रवचनगते, ६२. पुरुष, (वि०) ६३. प्रधान, ६४. पूर्वादिदेव, ६५. पूर्वनिवास, ६६. प्रजापते, (वि० प्रजापते) ६७. पृथिवीपते, (वि०) ६८. प्रतर्दन, ६९. परिनिर्मित, (वि०) ७०. पञ्चयज्ञधर, ७१. पञ्चकालकर्तृगते, ७२. पञ्चरात्रिक, ७३. परमस्वामिन्, ७४. परमहंस, ७५. परमयाज्ञिक, ७६. पद्मेशय, ७७. प्रथमत्रिसौपर्ण, ७८. पञ्चाग्ने, ७९. पञ्चमहाकल्प, ८०. प्राचीनगर्भ, ८१. पुरुष्टुत, (वि०) ८२. पुरुहूत, (वि०) ८३. प्रवृत्तवेदक्रिय, ८४. पवित्र, ८५. प्रजासर्गकर, ८६. पुरोडाभागहर, (वि०) ८७. फेनपाचार्य ८८. ब्रह्मपुरोहित, ८९. ब्रह्मकायिक (वि०) ९०. ब्रह्मेशय, ९१. ब्रह्माग्र्य, ९२. ब्राह्मणरूप, (ब्रह्मण्य) ९३. ब्राह्मणप्रिय, ९४. ब्रह्मण्यदेव, ९५. भक्तवत्सल, ९७. महापुरुष, (वि०) ९८. महाप्रजापते, ९९. मनस्पते, १००. मरूत्पते, (वि०) १०१. महाकायिक, (वि०) १०२. महाराजिक,

(वि०) १०३. महाभासुर, (वि०) १०४. महायाम्य, १०५. महातुषित, (वि०) १०६. महायज्ञ, (वि०) १०७. मानसिक, १०८. मनः, १०९. महायज्ञभागहर, ११०. महाविभूते, १११. माहात्म्यशरीर, ११२. महापवित्र, ११३. महामायाधर, ११४. महामूर्ते, ११५. याम्य, ११६. यज्ञ, (वि०) ११७. यज्ञसम्भव, ११८. यज्ञयोने (वि० यज्ञयोग,) ११९. यज्ञगर्भ, १२०. यज्ञहृदय, १२१. यज्ञस्तुत, (वि०) १२२. यज्ञभागहर (वि०) १२३. युगादे, १२४. युगमध्ये, १२५. युगनिधान, १२६. यशोवास, १२७. यम-नियम महानियम कृच्छ्रातिकृच्छ्र-सर्वकृच्छ्रनियमधर, १२८. लोकसाक्षिन् १२९, व्योम, १३०. वसुप्रद, (धर्मवसुप्रद, वि०) १३१. वनस्पते, (वि०) १३२. वाचस्पते, (वि०) १३३. वशवर्तिन्, १३४. वेदेशय, १३५. वैकुण्ठ, (वि०) १३६. विश्वेश्वर, वि०) १३७. वडवामुखाग्निः, १३८. वषट्कारः, १३९. वालखिल्य, १४०. वैखानस, १४१. विश्वरूप, १४२. व्रतावास, १४३. विद्यावास, १४४. वासुदेव, (वि०) १४५. वरप्रद, १४६. विश्वमूर्ते, १४७. षडंगविधान, १४८. श्रीवास, १४९. सनातन, (वि०) १५०. सदसद्व्यक्ताव्यक्त, १५१. सुप्रजापते, १५२. सलिलपते (वि०) १५२. सप्तमहाभासुर, १५३. संज्ञासंज्ञ, १५४. सुस्नात, १५५. सांख्ययोग (वि०, सांख्याचार्य) १५६. सारथिः, १५७. सूर्यः, (वि०) १५८. सामिकव्रतधर, १५९. समुद्राधिवास, १६०. सर्वावास, १६१. सर्वच्छन्दक, १६२. सर्वगते, १६३. सर्वदर्शिन्, १६४. सर्वतो निवृत्त, १६५. हंस, १६६. हयशिरः, १६७. हरिहय, १६८. हरिमेध, १६९. हिरण्मय,

Additional Names in the Vishṇu-Smṛiti

१. कामदेव, २. कामपालः, ३. महापाल, ४. सुप्रजापति, ५. महाप्रजापति, ६. पयस्पति, ७. महत्पति, ८. लक्ष्मीपति, ९. सर्वग, १०. ज्ञानगम्य, ११. ब्रह्मप्रिय, १२. भास्वर, १३. सप्त, १४. महाभाग, १५. स्वर, १६. अपरिनिर्मित, १७. पर, १८. पुराण, १९. लेख्य, २०. प्रजाधर, २१. विश्वधर, २२. शुचिश्रवः, २३. अच्युतार्चन, २४. पद्मधर, २५. पद्मधरावर, २६. महावराह, २७. द्रुहिण, २८. अच्युत, २९. धर्माङ्ग, ३०. विष्णो, ३१. जिष्णो, ३२. सहिष्णु, ३३. कृष्ण, ३४. पुण्डरीकाक्ष, ३५. परायण, ३६. जगत्परायण ।

Ch. 27 continues the story stating that Vishṇu was pleased with Kaśyapa and Aditi and promised them a boon. They desired that Vishṇu himself be born as their son. This was granted. The gods with Kaśyapa and Aditi returned to the latter's hermitage in Kurukshetra. The gods made a special request to Deva-Mātā Aditi to perform *Tapas*, and she began to do so on account of which that particular spot became known as Aditi-vana. In the midst of her intense penances Aditi recited a Stotra to Vishṇu consisting of some of the choicest epithets for the Divine Reality in classical Sanskrit literature, e.g.

बर्हिर्ज्योतिः आद्य प्रजापति हरिमेध
आत्मज्ञान-यज्ञ योगिचिन्त्य योगिन्निर्गुण
विशेष ब्रह्मरूपिन् यज्ञपुरुष विष्णु
विश्वोद्भव प्रतिष्ठ महात्मन् उपेन्द्र सूर्यरूपिन् अज अव्यय ।

(Vn. 27. 17-36).

Pleased with her praises Vishṇu promised a boon. She asked that her son Indra might become the lord of the three worlds. Vishṇu granted her request and further promised to take birth from her womb as her son. There upon Aditi conceived and Vishṇu entered her womb. By the glory of the Lord the Asuras began to lose their lustre.

The Asura king Bali asked Prahlāda, his grandfather the reason why the glory of the Asuras had began to be eclipsed. Thereupon Prahlāda meditated on the power of Vishṇu and had a vision of his presence in the womb of mother Aditi.

Ch. 29 gives an account of Prahlāda's meditation of Vishṇu and describes a vision of his cosmic form. Prahlāda recounted to Bali the nature of the Virāṭ form adding to his description a Stotra (Vn. 29. 16-27). Thereupon Bali expressed his wonder as to who Hari was whom Prahlāda was praising so eloquently :—

तात कोऽयं हरिर्नाम यतो नो भयमागतम्
सन्ति मे शतशो दैत्या वासुदेवबलाधिकाः (VN. 29.28).

Then Bali very mildly protested saying that amongst his Asuras were many superior in strength to Vāsudeva. Hearing this Prahlāda flared up and even used abusive language against Bali deprecating that such a despicable fellow should have been born in his family. This seems to be a work of some Bhāgavata writer who wanted to impress the readers with the glory of Nārāyaṇa in a rather flamboyant manner. Prahlāda said that Virochana was the Guru of Bali and that he was the Guru of Virochana and that his Guru was Vishṇu Nārāyaṇa, Lord of the universe. Out of this back-chat Prahlāda cursed Bali that the latter would lose his kingdom.

Ch. 30 delineates Bali as a docile junior who began to propitiate Prahlāda and to ask his pardon in the most gentle words. Thereupon the anger of Prahlāda also cooled down and he said that it was

a good thing that Bali had now come to realise the power of Vishṇu but the curse had been pronounced and would come out true but in the interest of Bali.

Ch. 30 describes the birth of Vāmana from the womb of Aditi after the expiry of ten months. Brahmā waited upon the child and recited a Stotra in which the phrase *Jaya* is repeated many times. It is in the style of a particular kind of Stotra in which the word *Jitam* was often repeated, and this may be styled as a *Jaya Stotra* (Vn. 30. 18-31). God Vishṇu became pleased and assured Brahmā of his succour in destroying the Asuras and installing Indra as the lord of the three worlds. Thereafter Vāmana assumed the form of a Vedic Brahmachārin and the various gods appeared to endow him with such articles as the black skin, staff, water-pot, sacred thread, Kuśa, Āsana, a pair of yellow garments. The Vedas and the various Śāstras like Sāṁkhya and Yoga waited upou Vāmana to sing his praises. He went about in the four directions of the earth over-powering everyone with his glory. Ultimately Vāmana came to the sacrificial ground of the king Bali.

The presence of Nārāyaṇa as Vāmana spread its invisible influence on the Yajña and over the Asuras. Bali felt perplexed by the subtle changes and interrogated his teacher Śukra why the Fire was not accepting the oblations in the sacrifice as before. Śukra explained to him that the great God Nārāyaṇa himself has made his appearance because of which Āsuric power was waning. Śukra also warned Bali that he should not deign to accept even the smallest request from anyone for gift of any kind. To this advice Bali reacted in the most magnanimous manner saying that within the Yajña field if anyone asked even for his head he would not hesitate to part with it :—

यज्ञेऽस्मिन्यदि यज्ञेशो याचते मां जनार्दनः ।
निजमूर्द्धानमप्यस्मै दास्यामेवाविचारितम् ॥
(Vn. 31. 23-24).

स मे वक्ष्यति देहीति गोविन्दः किमतोऽधिकम् ।
नास्तीति यन्मया नोक्तमन्येषामपि याचताम् ॥
(Vn. 31. 25)

Bali here exapatiates on the virtues of Dāna and considers that the piety prevailing in his kingdom was the fruit of the seed sown by him in the form of Dāna (*Dāna-bīja-phala*) :—

मद्राज्ये नासुखी कश्चिन्न दरिद्रो न चातुरः ।
नाभूषितो न चोद्विग्नो न प्रसादविवर्जितः ॥
हृष्टस्तुष्टः सुगन्धी च तृप्तः सर्वगुणान्वितः ।
जनः सर्वो महाभाग किमुताहं सदा सुखी ॥
एतद्विशिष्टमत्राप्तं दानबीजफलं मया ।

(Vn. 31. 27-29)

एतद्बीजवरं दानबीजं पतति चेद्गुरो ।
जनार्दने महापात्रे किं न प्राप्तं ततो मया ॥

(Vn. 31. 30)

उपभोगाच्छतगुणं दानं सुखकरं स्मृतम् ।

(Vn. 31. 31)

Attention may here be invited to an important word 'Dāna bīja-phalam', a novel idea evolved in the Gupta period that the seed sown in the form of the various virtues and diciplines of life fructify as so many fruits. A list of these fruits is given in the Brahma Purāṇa including the one of Dāna or gift as follows:—

1. The great fruit (*Mahā-phala*) of Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Moksha.
2. The very rare fruit of Tapas.
3. Sarva-Dāna-phala.
4. Sarva-Yajña-phala.
5. Tīrtha-Yātrā-phala.
6. Guru-sevā phala.
7. Devatārādhana-phala.
8. Svādhyāya-phala.
9. Nānā-Vrata-phala.
10. Nānā-Śāstra-phala.
11. Ahiṁsādi-phala.
12. Sarvāti-vāñchhita-phala.
13. Brahmacharya-phala.
14. Gārhasthya-phala.
15. Vanavāsa-phala.
16. Sanyāsa-phala.
17. Ishṭāpūrta-phala.
18. Anya śubha-karma-phala. (Brahma Purāṇa 27. 72-77)

Every fruit is borne on its own tree for which its individual seed must be sown. The conception was that Bhārata is a Karma-bhūmi in which the seeds of all these fruits formed a reality of life and therefore Bhārata was defined as the land having the seeds of all the fruits (Sarva-bīja-phala) :—

तदेतत् भारतं वर्षं सर्वबीजं द्विजोत्तमाः ।
(Brahma Purāṇa 27. 66)

One portion of the same idealistic conception is mentioned here as the excellent seed of Dāna from which the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom fructify. Bali thinks that this potent seed of Dāna if sown in the hands of Nārāyaṇa himself would bear a thousand-fold fruition.

एतद्बीजवरं दानबीजं पतति चेद् गुरो ।
जनार्दने महापात्रे किं न प्राप्तं ततो मया ॥ (Vn. 31. 30)

Bali rose to the occasion in the most generous-hearted way and felt happy that Nārāyaṇa-Vishṇu himself was approaching his Yajña. So when Vishṇu as Vāmana arrived, Bali greeted him with great joy, bringing all kinds of adorations and offering many kinds of treasures.

At this submission of Bali, Vāmana smiled and made the following request :

ममाग्निशरणार्थाय देहि राजन्पदत्रयम् ।
सुवर्णग्रामरत्नादि तदर्थिभ्यः प्रदीयताम् ॥ (Vn. 31. 49)

He asked for three foot-measures of earth for his Agni-śālā. The Three Steps correspond to the three Fires in the sacrifice. Bali questioned the purpose of asking for three step-measures only which was practically nothing and therefore he was willing to make an offering of a hundred thousand step-measures. Vāman replied that his purpose would be served by three steps only. Thereupon Bali granted his request. As soon as the holy water to confer the gift was poured in the hands of Vāmana he expanded himself as Virāṭ :

पाणौ तु पतिते तोये वामनोऽभूदवामनः ।
सर्वदेवमयं रूपं दर्शयामास तत्क्षणात् ॥ (Vn. 31. 53)

In his Trivikrama form were all the Devas, Sun and Moon were his eyes, the heaven was his head and the feet were the earth. The various Yajñas occupied his body and the Solar beams became his hair. All the stars became his vision. The intermediate quarters of space were his arms and the regions of space were his ears. The two

Vishṇu in Trivikrama Form. Line drawing of Ellora Sculpture, 8th century.
Courtsey : Sri Jagannath Ahivasi.

Aśvins were the power of his audition. Vāyu was his nostrils, Dharma was his mind, his speech was Truth, Sarasvatī was his toungue, Aditi, mother of gods, was neck. All the sciences became his armlets, Tvashṭā and Pūshā were his eye-lids. Agni became his mouth. Transcendent Brahman was his heart. The sage Kaśyapa was the virile power in him. The Vasus became his back-bone. The Marut hosts were the joints of his body. Rudra was his breast. The Great Ocean became his steadfast support, the Gandharvas became his belly. The great deity appeared as the embodiment of all splendour (*Sarva-jyotiḥ*), Tapas and universal transcendance (*Paramam Mahat*). The Vedas constituted his bust and the great Yajñas his knees. Seeing the cosmic form of Nārāyaṇa all the Asuras became dumb-founded and could not move. God Hari in his expanded form routed all the Asuras and made Indra king of the three worlds and heaven :—

जित्वा लोकत्रयं कृत्स्नं हत्वा चासुरपुंगवान् ।
पुरंदराय त्रैलोक्यं ददौ विष्णुरुरुक्रमः ॥ (Vn. 31. 70)

Then Vāmana being pleased with Bali ordained for him the high rank of Indra in the 8th Manvantera period of Sāvarṇi Manu and in the meantime to reign as king in the Pātāla world and attain long life lasting to the end of this Kalpa.

The legend of Vāmana and Vishṇu is found in the Ṛigveda in quite an explicit form and the same was taken up by the Purāṇas with Bali introduced to invest a dramatic interest in the story. The principal exploit of Vishṇu is his measuring out the three worlds by taking three steps :—

इदं विष्णुर्वि चक्रमे त्रेधा नि दधे पदम् । समूळ्हस्य पांसुरे ॥
त्रीणि पदा वि चक्रमे विष्णुर्गोपा अदाभ्यः । अतो धर्माणि धारयन् ॥
(RV. I. 22. 17-18)

यस्योरुषु त्रिषु विक्रमणेष्वधिक्षियन्ति भुवनानि विश्वा ॥
य इदं दीर्घं प्रयतं सधस्थमेको विममे त्रिभिरित्पदेभिः ॥
यस्य त्री पूर्णा मधुना पदान्यक्षीयमाणा स्वधया मदन्ति ।
य उ त्रिधातु पृथिवीमुत द्यामेको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा ॥
(RV. I. 154. 2-4)

यः पार्थिवानि त्रिभिरिद्विगामिभिरुरु क्रमिष्टोरुगायाय जीवसे ॥
(RV. I. 155. 4)

The cosmos is a measuring out by the power of movement symbolised as a Step; and since it is the outcome of a triune principle, it is spoken of as the Three Steps of the creative force. The three Lokas stand out as one of the many triadic patterns produced by the cosmic mould. The three Devas, the three Fires, the three Guṇas, the three Purushas and the three Vedas are links in the same series of symbolism. The three Devas Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva are the most outstanding concept of the same trinitarian principle without which there can be no manifestation. This was the basic principle of Vedic metaphysics and the deity symbolising this three-fold movement was Vishṇu whose etymology (*Veveshṭi Vyāpnoti iti Vishṇuḥ*) justifies this conception.

In this symbolism of the Three Steps Vishṇu is the principle of Prāṇa or Hiraṇyagarbha, which is defined as the mighty pulsating force in the cosmos on the vastest scale and also in the microcrosm in its minutest form. In the Śatapatha this rhythmic movement or throbbing is described as contraction and expansion (*Samañochana-Prasāraṇa*).

This oscillation is also defined as the two-fold movement of Coming and Going (Pretyai etyai, VS. 27. 43). This is the two-fold movement, centripetal and centrifugal, which with the stratum of balance constitutes the Three Steps of Vishṇu.

Besides, the Brāhmaṇa writers are aware of the intimate relationship between Vāmana and Vishṇu, viz. the Dwarf and the Giant :—

Vāmano ha Vishṇurās (ŚB. 1. 2. 5. 5.)
Sa hi Vaishṇavo yad Vāmanaḥ (ŚB. 5. 2. 5. 4.)
Vaishṇavo Vāmanaḥ (ŚB. 13. 2. 2. 9.)
Vaishṇavo Vāmanam ālabhante (TB. 1. 2. 5. 1.)

That which is Dwarf is the source and that which is Giant is the manifest form. The former is *ab intra*, the latter *ab extra*. It does not matter whether the created object is a tiny cell or a minute atom or a giant star. The phenomenon of Vāmana and Vishṇu is applicable to both, viz. that their cause or source is unmanifest or invisible and their concrete form is cosmic. No manifest form can be created without the Three Steps of Vishṇu or the factor of movement or oscillation and therefore the law is :—

Vishṇos tisṭhanti pradiśā vi dharmaṇi (RV. I. 164. 36)

This three-fold dispensation is true both in time and space of which the three worlds and the three aspects of time are the symbols.

The symbolism of the Three Lokas implies Pṛithivī, Antariksha and Dyauḥ in which Pṛithivī is the mortal or material manifestation, Dyuaḥ is the immortal or the Prāṇic form of all material or created objects and Antariksha is the middle point of consciousness where the two meet and are held together.

Bali is the king of the Asuras, the sovereign lord of the Earth. It is to him that Vishṇu repairs for the gift of the Three Steps. Bali as the name indicates is the Asura who keeps in his grip the principls of movement, locked in a dead coil and therefore creation cannot proceed. The Earth is the symbol of motherhood, not the material earth of limited dimension but the vast or unlimited principle of Universal motherhood which without Vishṇu remains infructuous. In Purāṇic legends Vishṇu is said to be the husband of Bhū Devī, or *vice versa* Pṛithivī is the consort of Nārāyaṇa. The meaning is clear that Pṛithivī cannot be creative without her husband Nārāyaṇa. The principle of cosmic motherhood must unite with the Three Steps or the creative force of Vishṇu. This is actually indicated when Vāmana makes his first request for Three Steps of Earth measure for the sake of building an Agniśālā for his Yajña :

Mamāgni-śaraṇārthāya dehi rājan pada-trayam, (Vn. 31. 49). The Yajña of Vishṇu is the whole cosmos. The Vedī of Yajña represents the entire measure of the earth (*Iyaṁ vediḥ parmantaṁ prithivyāḥ*, RV. I. 164.34). It is to release the principle of Yajña from the bondage of the Asuras that Vāmana-Vishṇu has to intervene. As a matter of fact, the Three Fires in the Yajña-Vedī are typical of the triadic cosmic pattern symbolised by the Three Steps.

The Ṛigveda also refers to this Vāmana-Vishṇu conception in other words where Vāmana is conceived of as Yuvā-Kumāra, a young hero of beautiful form and Virāṭ Vishṇu as of giant form (Bṛihach-Chharīra :—

बृहच्छरीरो विविमान ऋकभिर्युवा कुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम्
(RV. I. 155.6).

The principle that transforms the Dwarf into the Giant or the microcosm into macrocosm, or again the centre into its diameter, is

named *Ṛikvān*, i. e. rhythmic movement. Owing to the efficacy of this movement a perfect circle is evolved at each and every point on the two sides of the centre enclosing within its womb a Svastika of four right angles or 360 degrees :—

चतुर्भिः साकं नवतिं च नामभिश्चक्रं न वृत्तं व्यतींरवीविपत

(RV. I. 155.6).

Vishṇu who appeared before Bali as a Dwarf was hiding within him the cosmic form. Vāmana transforms himself as Virāṭ or the immanent potential becomes manifest reality. This can be said of even the seed which by the principle of movement is destined to become the tree. Each organism starts life from a single fertilized cell and by virtue of the process of pulsation or rhythmic movement or rotation of Chakra become manifest as the full body. This is the conversion of Vāmana into Virāṭ. Aditi, mother of the gods is infinite Nature or the Universal mother, and Vāmana is processed in her womb meaning thereby that the pattern of threefold movement exists in the source and becomes visible in effect as the principle of Universal applicability.

Ch. 32 keys to a new theme, viz. description of the River Sarasvatī in Kurukshetra, its source and Māhātmya : Whence has this great river taken its rise, where it flows in the region of Kurukshetra, how it has created a pond in that region and what are the Tīrthas on its bank ?

It is stated in reply that Sarasvatī has its source at a place named Plaksha which was also known as Plaksha-prasravaṇa, i. e. the glacial water flow of Plaksha. She enters after finishing her mountainous terrain, the forest called Dvaita-vana. When she was issuing forth from Plaksha, Mārkaṇḍeya, the Eternal Sage, recited a Stotra in her honour :—

O Goddess, you are the mother of the world and also the mother of the Vedas (*Vedāraṇi*). The existent and the non-existent (*Sad-Asad*) and Akshara and Kshara both vest in thee as Fire is concealed in the wood and as scent inheres in the earth, so Brahman and the world exist in you. The Three Mātrās of Oṁkāra and that which is beyond the Mātrās form part of you. The Three Worlds, Three Devas, Three Vedas, Three Fires, Three Powers, Three Lights, Three

objects of life (*Dharma, Artha, Kāma*), Three Guṇas, Three Varṇas, Three Dhātus, Three States (*Jāgrat, Svapna, Sushupti*)—all these are manifestations of your triple form :

त्रयो लोकास्त्रयो वेदास्त्रैविद्यं पावकत्रयम् ।
त्रीणि ज्योतींषि वर्गाश्च त्रयो धर्मादयस्तथा ॥
त्रयो गुणास्त्रयो वर्णास्त्रयो देवास्तथा क्रमात् ।
त्रिधातवस्तथाऽवस्थाः पितरश्चाणिमादयः ॥
एतन्मात्रात्रयं देवि तव रूपं सरस्वति । (Vn. 32. 10-11)

The Seven Soma sacrifices, the Seven Havi sacifices and the Seven Pāka-saṁsthā sacrifices which are seen by the different Ṛishis and which are eternal like Brahman are Thy form.[1] These are performed with the utterance of Thy name, indefinable, composed of half a Mātrā, supreme, unchanging, celestial, devoid of alteration is this. Thy other supreme form cannot be described. The mouth or the tongue, the lips, or other organs cannot declare that form. Vishṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, Sun, Moon and Light cannot declare thy form, whose abode is the universe, which has the form of the universe ; which is the ruler of universe ; and which is the subject of the philosophies of Sāṁkhya and Vedas firmly established in their many recensions. That form is without beginning, middle or end ; which is both Sat and Asat ; both one and many ; which assumes various kinds of manifestations ; which is without name and is yet named after the six Guṇas, has many names and depends on the Three Guṇas, which is possessed of the majesty of manifold Śakti. Happiness and highest ecstasy are thy form. Brahman who is one without a second (Advaita) and is pervasive in the world of duality is your form. Things

1. The Seven Soma-saṁsthā sacrifices are :—(1) Agnishṭoma, (2) Atyagnishṭoma (3) Ukthya. (4) Shoḍaśin (5) Atirātra (6) Vajapeya and (7) Āptoryāma.
The seven Haviḥ-saṁsthā sacrifices are :—(1) Agnyādheya, (2) Agni-hotra, (3) Darśa-paurṇamāsa, (4) Chaturmāsyāni (Vaiśva.deva, Varuṇapraghāsa Sāka-medha, and Śuna-Sīrīya) (5) Paśu.bandha, (6) Śautrā-maṇi and (7) Āgrāyaṇeshṭi.
The Seven Pāka-Saṁsthā Yajñas are given differently by different authors. According to Āpastamba they are (1) Aupāsana-homa, (2) Vaiśva-deva, (3) Pārvaṇa (4) Ashṭaka, (5) Śrāddha, (6) Sarpabali, (7) Īśāna-bali. According to Baudhāyana, (1) Huta (2) Prahuta (3) Āhuta (4) Śūlagava, (5) Bali. haraṇa (6) Pratyavarohaṇa, and (7) Ashṭaka-homa. According to Gautama, (1) Ashṭaka. (2) Pārvaṇa. (3) Śrāddha, (4) Śrāvaṇī. (5) Agrahāyaṇī, (6) Chaitrī, and (7) Aśvayujī.

that are permanent and others that perish ; those that are gross and those that are subtle and still subtler ; those again that are on the earth, or those that are in the atmosphere or elsewhere—they, derive their perceptible form from Thee. Every thing that is visible (Mūrta) and invisible (Amūrta) and all actions amongst creatures and amongst the gods or elsewhere is connected with Thee by the vowels and by the consonants.

This sublime stotra to Goddess Sarasvatī is the literary creation of one versed in the ancient tradition of the Vedas and in the new ideology of the classical philosophy. It is couched in quite a number of technical terms which require to be explained from the point of view of metaphysical thought. Its essence is the conception of the Great Goddess Sarasvatī as identical with Brahman in his transcendent and immanent aspects, the one called Amātra and the other Tri-mātra. Even in ancient times the stotra was considered important enough to be taken in other Purāṇas, e. g. in Mārkaṇḍeya (Ch. 23. 30-47). It is not surprising, since, according to Vāmana, Ṛishi Mārkaṇḍeya himself is the author of the Stotra which was later on incorporated in the existing version of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. The stotra seems to have been composed in the region of Kurukshetra where the Sarasvatī flows

It is also noteworthy that Sarasvatī as conceived in the stotra is not a mere channel of water but the holy stream made the symbol of the great mother of the universe who is the consort of Brahmā, the creator. Here we are reminded of the three sublime Mantras in the igveda :—

Pāvakā naḥ Sarasvatī vājebhir vājinīvatī Yajñaṁ vāshṭu dhiyā vasuḥ
Chodayitrī sūnṛitānāṁ chetantī sumatīnām Yajñaṁ dadhe Sarasvatī
Maho arṇaḥ arṇha Sarasvatī prachetayati ketuna Dhiyo viśvā virājati

(RV. I. 3. 10-12)

Sarasvatī is the purifier possessed of all the Vājas or impelling forces in the cosmos, rich in treasures, and comes to the sacrifice, through the power of the mind.

She is the impeller of all the Prāṇic energies and the enkindler of thought-forces and upholder of the Yajña. Sarasvatī is a mighty flood and awakens by her ensign. She illumines the world-thought.

The Purāṇic stotra is in line with the Vedic conception of Sarasvatī. The holy river of Kurukshetra was a Vedic river and was made the symbol of the universal creative force, identical with the supreme consciousness of Prajāpati.

Sarasvatī became pleased with Ṛishi Mārkaṇḍeya and promised to follow where he would take her. Mārkaṇḍeya replied that she should first repair to Brāhma-sara, secondly to Nāga-hrada, and thirdly to Kurukshetra, flowing through these holy places in their order.

Ch. 33 gives a factual description of the course of Sarasvatī in Kurukshetra. She came to Arantuka, the spot marked by the shrine of the Yaksha of that name which as we have shown above was in Pṛithūdaka (modern Pehoa) that was the starting point of the Kurukshetra *Parikramā* Sarasvatī sanctified Kurukshetra, with her waters and then took a westerly course to meet the western sea. On its bank are thousands of Tīrthas.

It is stated that the region between the river Sarasvatī and Dṛiśadvatī (modern Chitang) which is the southern boundary of Kurukshetra was known as Brahmāvarta.

The names of some important Tīrthas of Kurukshetra are given, e.g. Brahma-vedi, Sannihita-saraḥ, Sthāṇu-hrada, and the shrine of Arantuka Yaksha. As we have already seen these were the sacred spots in and around Pṛithūdaka.

Ch. 34 gives the names of the seven forests and seven rivers of Kurukshetra, an account based on a close-up view of this holy region. These are, (1) Kāmyaka Vana, (2) Aditi-vana, (3) Vyāsa-vana, (4) Phalakīvana, (5) Sūrya-vana, (6) Madhu-vana, (7) Puṇyasita-vana amongst forests; and 1. Sarasvatī, 2. Vaitaraṇī, 3. Āpagā, 4. Amulū Nadī, 5. Kauśikī, 6. Dṛishadvatī and 7. Hiraṇyavatī amongst rivers. It is specifically mentioned that these were mere channels flooded in the rainy season (*Varshā-kāla vahā*) excepting Sarasvatī. Even during rains their sacred character is not lessened, although they become muddy (*Rajasvalā*). Albeit on their periodical courses, no pollution teints them. Such is the holiness of Kurukshetra.

The Tirtha-yātrā of Kurukshetra begins from the shrine of Arantuka. From there one proceeds to Aditi-vana where Devamātā Aditi performed Tapas to obtain a son. From there one proceeds to

the holy place of Vishṇu, named Satata or Sannihita where Vishṇu stays in his invariable presence. It is a pond where Vimaleśvara Śiva is also installed and both Vishṇu and Baladeva are worshipped. From there one should proceed to Pariplava Tīrtha. It is at the point where Kauśikī meets Dṛishadvatī which is also mentioned in the Mahābhārata (Āraṇyaka Parva 81. 80). Special mention is made of the washing off of the sin of criminal acts by a dip in the Kauśikī-Dṛishadvati Saṅgama. This is significant as pointing to acts of brigandage and looting of travellers in these dense jungles of Kurukshetra to which reference is made in several places, for example, the robbery committed against Yādava women while being escorted by Arjuna.

From there one should proceed to Dakshāśrama and worship there Daksheśvara Śiva. Then one comes to Śālūkinī Tīrtha where both Vishṇu and Śiva are to be worshipped. The name of Śālūkinī occurs also in the Mahābhāshya, but its present identification is uncertain. Thereafter one proceeds to Sarpir-dadhi which is a wrong reading for Sarpa-darvī of the Mahābhārata (Āraṇyaka Parva 81. 12), identified with modern Safidon.

The next point in the course of the pilgrimage is mentioned as Rantuka, also called Narakoddhāra; but actually, this seems to be a corrupt reading for Tarantuka, the second Dvārapāla Yaksha of Kurukshetra, as mentioned here and also in the Āraṇyaka Parva (83. 15).

From there one goes to Pañcha-nada, a spot sacred to five rivers created by Rudra and then to the spot called Koṭi Tīrtha with the shrine of Koṭīsvara Śiva. One important fact is mentioned that Koṭi Tīrtha was the spot where there was the shrine of god Vāmana whose Māhātmya forms the subject of description in the Vāmana Purāṇa. Next comes Aśvinī Tīrtha and thereafter Vāmana Tīrtha, Soma-Tīrtha where Soma was cured of his wasting illness, Bhūteśvara, Jvālāmāleśvara, Eka-Haṁsa, Pauṇḍarīka which we many recognise as a fixed point identified with modern Pundri (cf. Āraṇyaka Parva 83. 24, 26). Then one comes to Muñjavat that is the place of the famous Yakshī named Ulūkhala-Mekhalā, who was the third Dvārapāla of Kurukshetra situated in the south direction on the path of pilgri-

mage. The husband of Ulūkhala-Mekhalā is mentioned as Kapila Mahā Yaksha as already mentioned. This was a famous shrine which attracted pilgrims from far and near and was also the spot called Pushkara Tīrtha.

A strange Gāthā famous in folk-lore about this Yakshī shrine is given here :—

युगन्धरे दधि प्राश्य उषित्वा चाच्युतस्थले ।
तद्वद्भूतालये स्नात्वा सपुत्रा वस्तुमिच्छसि ।
दिवा मया ते कथितं रात्रौ भक्ष्यामि निश्चितम् । (Vn. 34. 37-48)

Many an inference can be drawn from this Gāthā verse. Originally Yakshī Ulūkhala-Mekhalā was an ogress fed with oblation of blood and flesh or bloody-sacrifices. That tradition continued in the minds of the people. There were three other places in Kurukshetra, viz. Yugandhara, Achyuta-Sthala and Bhūtālaya visited by the pilgrims on special occasions marked by particular ceremonies, viz. milk or curd as the Prasāda eaten in Yugandhara and a short stay at the two latter places. Then they came to the shrine of the Yakshī where the pilgrims stayed only during day time and were scared away at night for fear of being eaten up by the Yakshī, the blood-thirsty ogress, probably an allusion is made to bloody sacrifices nocturnally indulged in, which were a cause of general terror in the minds of the people. There is no doubt that here we find conspicuous mention of the Yaksha-cult prevailing in Kurukshetra.

Ch. 35 expounds the glory of Rāma-hrada or the five ponds associated with the name of Paraśu-Rāma, who here propitiated his Pitṛis and was freed from the sin of slaying the Kshatriyas. N.L. De has given a long descriptiou of Rāmahrada, locating it north of Thāneśvara and identifying it as Brahmasara, Śarayaṇāvata of the Ṛigveda and Chakra Tīrtha where Kṛishṇa used his Chakra against Bhīshma. Here Kuru performed Tapas and it was this lake where Purūravas is said to have found Urvaśi, and Indra killed Vṛitrāsura with his Vajra. But in the itinerary of Kurukshetra Parikramā, this position of Rāmahrada near Thāneśvara does not fit in quite well.

Next are mentioned some other Tīrthas as Vaṁśamūla, Kāya-śodhana, Lokoddhāra, Śrī-Tīrtha, Śāligrāma, Kapila-hrada, Sūrya-

Tīrtha, Bhavānī-vana (called Gavāṁ-bhavam in Āraṇyaka Parva, 81.40), Brahmāvarta.

At this stage there is mention of the Dvārapāla Yaksha Arantuka a second time which can only mean that here is a second account of a Parikramā or Tīrtha-yātrā which may have been of a shorter course or what is known as Antargṛihī. The Arantuka shrine is definitely mentioned as on the Sarasvatī which could have been only at Pṛithūdaka as mentioned during the course of the first Parikramā. Other holy spots in this account are Avantī Tīrtha with Kāmeśvara Śiva Liṅga, Mātṛi Tīrtha, Sītāvana, Śvāvilloma Tīrtha, Daśāśvamedha and Mānusha Tīrtha.

Ch. 36 continues the account of the Kurukshetra Tīrthas stating that the river Āpagā was situated at a distance of a *Krośa* to the east of Mānusha Tīrtha. The Tīrtha named Brahmodumbara was the place associated with the penances of Brahmā and of the Seven Ṛishis. A definite point is mentioned as Kapilastha, obviously a corrupt reading for Kapisthala, modern Kaithal about 15 miles to the west of Puṇḍrī. Other Tīrthas are Kalasī, Saraka, Rudrakoṭi, Iḍāspada, Kedāra Mahā-Tīrtha, Kiṁa-rūpa-tīrtha, Asyajanma-tīrtha (Anajanma in the Āraṇyaka Parva 81, 67), Nāgahrada, Puṇḍarīka, Pravishṭa on the Vaitaraṇī river, Rasāvartana, Alopaka, Phalakī-vana (a name which has also occured before), which from the description given here seems to have been on the banks of the Dṛishadvatī river), Pāṇikhāta-tīrtha, Miśraka-tīrtha, Vyāsa-vana, Manojava-tīrtha, Madhu-vana. After this one comes to the confluence of the Kauśikī with the Dṛiśdvati (repeated a second time), Vyāsasthalī, Kiṁdattarūpa, Tilaprastha (modern Tilpat), Anna and Sudina, Kṛitapuṇya, Gaṅgāhrada (Āraṇyaka Parva 81.85), Koṭi-tīrtha, Vāmanaka, Vishṇupāda, Jyeshṭhāśrama, Sūrya-tīrtha, Ulottaranāma.

Ch. 37 continues a further list of the following Tīrthas :

Pavana-hrada, Hanumatsthāna, Śālihotra-tīrtha, Śrī-Kuñja on the Sarasvatī, Naimisha-kuñja, Kulottaraṇa, Kanyā-tīrtha (Āraṇyaka Parva 81.94) with which the story of Vedavatī was connected, Brahmā-tīrtha, Soma-tīrtha, Saptasarasvatī tīrtha where the seven streams of river Sarasvatī unite to become a single stream, the names of those seven being (1) Suprabhā, (2) Kāñchanākshī, (3) Vimalā, (4) Mānasa-

hradā, (5) Sarasvat-toyā, (6) Suvarṇā and (7) Vimalodakā (Vn. 37. 18). The first of these named Suprabhā is euologised as brought from Pushkara by Mārkaṇḍeya and as having become visible for the sacrifice of the Seven Ṛishis and therefore known as Suprabhā-Sarasvatī. All these seven streams appear to be only seasonal (rainy) channels mingling their water into the main stream of Sarasvatī. Kāñchanakeśī was brought by Ṛishi Maṅkaṇa from Naimisha. The third Vimalā (variant Viśālā) was brought from Gayā by Ṛishi Gaya, while the fourth Mānasa-hrada (variant Manohara) was brought by Uddālaka Ṛishi from Uttara Kośala. The seventh Vimalodakā is said to have been brought from Gaṅgādvāra by Maṅkaṇa, a Siddha of the Sapta-Sārasvata Tīrtha.

Ch. 38 tells of Ṛishi Maṅkaṇa, the mind-born son of Kaśyapa. He performed penances and came to have a bath in the Sapta-Sārasvata Tīrtha with his birch-garment. Rambhā and other celestial beauties appeared before him by which his mind was agitated, and his seed emitted which was collected by a hunter (*Vyādha*) in a jar (*Kumbha*). That seed in the jar became differentiated as Seven from which Seven Ṛishis (*Saptarshis*) were born, later known as Seven Marut hosts (*Sapta Marud Gaṇa*) :—

सप्तधा प्रविभागं तु कलशस्थं जगाम ह
तत्रर्षयः सप्त जाता विदुर्यान्मरुतो गणान्

(Vn. 38.5)

The Seven Marut Hosts—Their names are given here as :—

1. Vāyu-vega. 2. Vāyu-bala, 3. Vāyu-hā, 4. Vāyu maṇḍala 5. Vāyu-kāla, 6, Vāyu-retas and, 7. Vāyu-chakra. These are the seven sons of Ṛishi Maṅkaṇa who sustain all moving and stationary creatures in the world :

तस्यर्षेस्तनया एते धारयन्ति चराचरम्

(Vn. 38.7)

From his hand injured by a blade of Kuśa grass exuded the sap of plants (*Śāka-rasa*). Seeing that sap Maṅkaṇa was filled with joy and began to dance, by the force of which every thing in the world became involved in a cosmic dance.

स वै शाकरसं दृष्ट्वा हर्षाविष्टः स नृत्तवान्
ततः सर्वं प्रनृत्तं च स्थावरं जङ्गमं च यत्

(Vn. 48.8-9)

Seeing every one come under his power and eclipsed by his glory, Brahmā other Ṛishis approached God Śiva, requesting him to make Maṅkaṇa desist from his dance. Thereupon Śiva asked the reason of his exultation. The Ṛishis in reply pointed out the sap of plants flowing from his hand which had made him fall into the ecstasy of dance. Śiva replied that, that sap was no cause of wonder for him, and having said so he tapped his thumb with the point of his finger by which a stream of white ashes of the nature of smoke began to flow :—

अङ्गुल्यग्रेण विप्रेन्द्राः स्वाङ्गुष्ठस्ताडितोऽभवत्
ततो भस्म क्षतात्तस्मान्निर्गतं हिमसन्निभम्

(Vn. 38.15-16)

This humbled the pride of Maṅkaṇa and he fell at the feet of Śiva, and praised him with a Stotra. Śiva, thus pleased, blessed the Muni for a thousand-fold increase of his Tapas and promised to live with him in his Āśrama in the Sapta-Sārasvata Tīrtha.

In the rather dull list of Tīrthas this story of Maṅkaṇa is a brilliant purposeful patch which although apparently puerile, is full of Vedic motifs pregnant with meaning. The author of the Purāṇa, while talking about the Seven Streams of Sarasvatī, probably was reminded of the metaphysical principle by which the one undifferentiated stream of creative energy becomes diversified as Seven. This story holds good in the form of many Heptads (*Saptaka*) the birth of which is the main plank of this story. Let us look closely at these motifs.

Maṅkaṇa is the principle of Mind that exists in the beginning according to the Ṛigveda :—

Kāmas tadagre samavartatādhi, manaso retaḥ prathamaṁ yadāsīt.

(RV. X. 129. 4.).

Maṅkaṇa is an etymological formation of esoteric import and stands for ***Manaḥ-kaṇa***, i. e. the seed of individuated mind which arose in the universal Saṁvit or consciousness of Prajāpati. That mind becomes diversified as the Seven Primeval Ṛishis called *Sapta Viprāḥ*, *Sapta Aṅgirasaḥ*, *Saptarshayaḥ*, etc. The primeval mind is typified as Indra and Indra in order to become effective for creation must be assisted by the host of Seven Maruts who are symbols of the Seven Prāṇas. In the Ṛigveda the groups of seven Maruts have different sets of names, e. g. Tuvishmān, 2. Śubhra, 3. Śushṇa, 4. Krudhmī,

5. Dhūni, 6. Asura and 7. Vidhartā (RV. VII. 56. 5-9). Each one of these Seven is further divided into groups of seven, thus making 49 Maruts in all as follows :—

Group I—1. वातस्वनसः, 2. येष्ठाः, 3. शोभिष्ठाः, 4. संमिश्लाः, 5. उग्राः, 6. इष्मिणः, 7. ऋतसापः।

Group II—1. बुध्न्याः, 2. प्रयज्यवः, 3. गृहमेधाः, 4. स्वश्वः, 5. प्रक्रीडिनः, 6. दशस्यन्तः, 7. वरिवस्यन्तः।

Group III—1. मध्वः, 2. पिप्रियाणाः, 3. विपश्चिशः, 4. पिशानाः, 5. उपस्तुताः, 6. आस्तुताः, 7 शतिनः। (RV. VII. 57)

Group IV—तुविमन्यवः, 2. धूतयः, 3- प्रघास्याः, 4. तुराः, 5. भीमासः, 6. अयासः, 7. सस्वार्ताः। (RV. VIII. 58.5)

Group V—1. घृष्विराधसः, 2. अस्रेधन्तः, 3. हंसाः, 4. नीलपृष्ठाः, 5. सान्तपनाः, 6. गृहमेधाः, 7. स्वतवसः।

Group VI—1. पर्वताः, 2 सिन्धवः, 3. अरुणप्सवः, 4. ऋभुक्षणः, 5. पृश्नयः, 6. सुम्नायन्तः, 7. प्रचेतसः। (RV. VII. 7.1-12)

Group VIII—1. वृक्तबर्हिषः, 2. अभिद्यवः, 3. हिरण्यवाश्यः, 4. प्रयज्यवः, 5. चित्रवाजाः, 6. पर्शानाः, 7. आदृणयावानः। (RV. VIII. 7. 20-35) [Ojha, देवतानिवित्, p. 11]

The birth of the Maruts from the seed of Maṅkaṇa is exemplified in the motif of the appearance of Rambhā and the consequent agitation of Muni's mind, emission of his seed and its collection in a jar by the Lubdhaka. The same motifs are repeated in the birth of Vasishṭha in which case the emission of the seed of Mitrā-Varuṇa was caused by the beauty of Urvaśī, which seed was also collected in a jar. Rambhā and Urvaśī both are typical of the principle of beauty or Universal-Woman that agitates the Mind of the Creator. Both Veda and Purāṇa conceive of this primeval excitement, *Jāgaraṇa*, or *Kshobha* as necessary for the initiation of the creative-process which is termed as Rajas, Movement. In the Ṛigveda, the one Unborn Aja is said to create round him six other Rajāṁsi who together make an *Octave* :—

वि यस्त तस्तम्भ षडिमा रजांस्यजस्यरूपे किमपस्विदेकम्।

(RV. I. 164.6)

The Rajas principle points to the primeval oscillations which are conceived of as a cosmic dance started by the great Prāṇic Urge that existed in the beginning. It is said in the Ṛigveda that the gods

started a Universal dance and splashed with their feet the cosmic dust particles which were all seized up with movement :—

यद् देवः अदः सलिले सुसंरब्धा अतिष्ठत। तत्रा वो नृत्यतामिव तीव्रो रेणुरजायत।
(RV. X. 72. 6)

The great dancer is named Rudra Śiva in the Purāṇas and Indra in the Ṛigveda :—

न ह्यंग नृतो त्वदन्यं विन्ददामि राधसे। राये द्युम्नाय शवसे च गिर्वणः
(RV. VIII. 24.12.)

This dancer (*Nritu*) is Sūrya who as Kāla is demonstrating his perfect dancing rhythm. The rhythmic movement of Prāṇa or the cosmic life-principle, manifesting in each individual centre, is described as the process of rhythmic contraction and expansion (*Prāṇo vai samañchana-prasāraṇam* ŚB. 8.1.4.10 ; *Eti cha Preti cha*, VS. 27.45). When the Fires of creation began to blaze within the depths of the Universal Ocean of Energy, the gods or divine powers symbolising the primeval building forces sprang upon their feet in an agitated condition and their dance-movement filled all space with ruffled particles of Matter. This is the eloquent imagery of the Tāṇḍava dance which initiated the creative process. This is the meaning of the dance of Maṅkaṇa, viz. the rhythmic movement of Prāṇa.

Maṅkaṇa signifies the individual, but the same derives its power from the Universal Prāṇa symbolised as Mahādeva, who is the transcendent principle of Agni or Life before whom Maṅkaṇa is humbled. Here the story-teller gives us two symbolical hints, viz. the sap from the hand of Maṅkaṇa (*Śāka-rasa*) and the flux of ashes from the thumb of Śiva (*Bhasma*) which stand for the principles of Soma and Agni respectively, both of them being essential for creation (cf. *Agni Somātmakaṁ jagat*), and of this pair, Agni is the higher principle, and Soma its sub-ordinate :—

अग्निर्जागार तमयं सोम आह तवाहमस्मि सख्ये न्योकाः
(RV. V. 44. 15).

Thus the sap of plants (*Śāka-rasa*) and *Bhasma* or ashes of Agni are symbols of the two mighty principles underlying creation to which reference is made in the Atharva Veda as *Hima* and *Ghraṁsa* (AV. 13. 1. 46, *Agnī himaṁ ghraṁsaṁ cha*). In the ultimate analysis, both are forms of Agni and it is only as relative formulations they are spoken of as the two streams of heat and cold :

आपोभूयिष्ठा इत्येकोऽब्रवीद्
अग्निर्भूयिष्ठ इत्यन्योऽब्रवीद्
(RV. I. 161, 9).

Thus, the basic principle of Prāṇic creation, although one in the beginning, becomes Seven in the creative process, which, it is the objective of the story of Ṛishi Mankaṇa to formulate in Purāṇic terminological structure based on the famous key-word Sapta-Sārasvata. *Kaṇa* is the same as Vedic *Reṇu* or agitated particle of Prāṇa which carries with it the impelling force of the Manas or Universal Mind of the Creator. Esoterically, Manaḥ-kaṇa becomes Mankaṇa (*Paro-ksheṇa paroksha-priyāḥ vai devāḥ*).

Ch. 39 mentions Auśanasa Tīrtha where Ṛishi Uśanas had obtained perfection and so also another sage, Rahodara. The story is that the head of a demon once cut off by Rāma in the Daṇḍaka Forest, gets stuck to the neck of Rahodara, because of which he found it difficult to move. He was told by the Ṛishis to go to the Auśanasa-tīrtha where he would be relieved of his hurdle. Rahodara came to the holy place and had a dip in the pond there, when the Asura-head got severed from his body and fell in to the waters of the tank. Rahodara became free from sin :—

ततः स विरजा भूत्वा पूतात्मा वीतकल्मषः (Vn. 39. 12)

In commemoration of this miracle of Rahodara, the Ṛishis named the Tīrtha as 'Kapālamochana'

The meaning of this short but interesting story is explicit. Each individual bicephalous being is the form of Rahodara, having a normal head which is integrated to the divine and at the same time another head which is Āsuric. The Devas and the Asuras both abide in the individual mind and one has to get rid of the Āsuric mind. Mind is the head, or the seat of thought. What the story-writer wishes to convey is that the 'Auśanasa Tīrtha' was sacred to the sage Uśanas who was the teacher of the asuras but who was absolutely free from Āsuric influences or thoughts. Uśanas did not allow the shadow of Āsuric powers to becloud his mind. He was a Ṛishi and therefore wedded to the Vedic tradition of the Devas. It is exactly this state of the higher discipline of mental power which is called divine and which remains free from the hostile Āsuric influences. Rāma as the divine principle had once destroyed the head of the Asura

10

but the Āsuric type remains and has to be conquered by each individual in his own centre. That is a proforma in the individual of the eternal '*Daivāsuram*' struggle, and in each individual the battle has to be fought and won to make oneself free from the contamination of Rajas and Tamas with which the mind gets soiled by its contact with matter. This is the significance of the Rahodara story.

It is also stated that due to the overpowering Brahmanic infiuence of the Auśanasa Tīrtha, Viśvāmitra attained to the status of Brahmahood and he came a Brahma-Ṛishi.

After that one goes to the Pṛithūdaka Tīrtha. It is said that a certain Ṛishi named Ṛishaṅgu, who lived at Gaṅgādvāra, came in the last moments of his life to Pṛithūdaka on the north bank of Sarasvatī in order to attain Moksha. In Pṛithūdaka is also Brahma-Yoni where Brahmā on the Sarasvatī wishing to create the world produced the four Varṇas from his body, a conception formulated in the Purusha Śukta (RV. 10. 90. 12).

There is another Tīrtha named Avakīrṇa. Here a short story of Baka-Dālbhya is inserted. Once the Naimishīya Ṛishis with Bakadālbhya as their leader approached Dhṛitarāhsṭra with a reguest which the latter did not entertain. Enraged at this Dālbhya came to this Tīrtha and performed an '*Abhichārika-Yajña*' (rite of black shool) by which the kingdom of Dhṛita terribly suffered. Then the king came and propitiated the Ṛishis and things were restored to normal.

Ther is also the Yayāta Tīrtha on a river named Madhu (same as ***Madhusava*** mentioned as one of the seven rivers of Kurukshetra, Vn. 34. 7). At the Madhusrava tīrtha Śrāddha to the Pitṛis is performed with honey. There is another Tīrtha named Vasishṭhāpavāha.

Ch. 40 gives the ancient tangled story of the rivalry between Viśvāmitra and Vasishṭha. Vasishṭha had his Āśrama on the Sarasvatī at Sthāṇvīśvara. Viśvāmitra also was living nearby at the same place. Once he commanded Sarasvatī to his presence and asked her to bring to him Vasishṭha borne on her flood. Sarasvatī was greatly distressed and went to Vasishṭha who comforted her and accepted to be transported on her high waters. At the sight of Vasishṭha Viśvāmitra flew into great rage and hurled a weapon to kill him. Thereupon Sarasvatī frightened with the sin of Brahma-

hatyā concealed Vasishṭha in her waters for which Viśvāmitra cursed that for a year her current would be changed to blood. It happened like this, and Sarasvatī became polluted by a crowd of Asuras, Bhūtas, Rākshasas, Yakshas, etc.

Once some pious Munis came from afar to have a bath in the Sarasvatī but felt great pain at seeing her in that condition. Therefore they brought the pure waters of river Aruṇā to mingle with Sarasvatī and cleanse her. The Rākshasas thus deprived of their food began to starve and approached the Munis with a view to propitiate them and said : "We have no inherent desire for committing sin, but the evil actions of others take the forms of Rākshasas. The deviation from Dharma or virtue by the four Varṇas, men and women, leads to the mass of sinfulness typified by us as Brahma-Rākshasas and other ignoble beings; those who dishonour their teachers and parents become Rākshasas by their sinful acts (*vikarmabhiḥ*) :—

न च नः कामकारोऽयं यद्वयं पापकारिणः ।
युष्माकं चाप्रसादेन दुष्कृतेन च कर्मणा ॥
पक्षोऽयं वर्धतेऽस्माकं यतश्च ब्रह्मराक्षसाः ।
एवं वैश्याश्च शूद्राश्च क्षत्रियाश्च विकर्मभिः ॥

(Vn. 10.34-35.)

This was a new rational interpretation of the idea of '*Rākshasa*' which the Bhāgavata teachers formulated during the Gupta age. It is also found in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa :—

न वयं मानुषाहारा अन्ये ते नृप राक्षसाः
सुकृतस्य फलं यत्तु तदश्नीमो वयं नृप
स्वभावं च मनुष्याणां चोषितां च विमानितः
मानिताश्च समश्नीमो न वयं जन्तुखादकाः :

(Mārkaṇḍeya 70. 16-17.)

"O king, we are not man-eaters ; there are others who practise cannibalism. We feed ourselves on the fruits of the meritorious acts done by others. We do not feed on creatures as such, but being made angry or pleased, we change their temperaments."

Sarasvatī is the river which, even from the Vedas, was sublimated into a symbol of Wisdom and Knowledge or the principle of mind which emanates from the Creator or Prajāpati Brahmā.

The ideal of Vasishṭha is that of a Ṛishi who thinks in terms of the good of all, but Viśvāmitra thinks in terms of force by which he wants to kill others. Vasishṭha is *Brahma* or spiritual authority and Viśvāmitra is *Kshatra* or temporal power. The ideal condition is that the two should function in harmony. If the ideal of the Ṛishi is lost sight of the kingdom falls a prey to the naked show of beastly force as mentioned here.

By this frank self-confession of the Rākshasas the Munis became pleased and assigned to them also their proper spheres, since in the world created by Prajāpati both the Devas and the Asuras occupy their respective places and are destined to exist as the archetypal forces of good and evil or of light and darkness.

The Purāṇic story of Vasishṭha being carried away by the current of Sarasvatī explains the etymology of the name *Vasishṭhodvāhā*. The rumblings of the ancient Vedic episode of the rivalry between Vasishṭha and Viśvāmitra are heard in the Purāṇic legend and there are different accounts of their strife, and the Vāmana Purāṇa has its own version, altering some of the motifs of the old Vedic story. There it is Viśvāmitra who leads his follower-kings to cross the Sutlej and finding it in flood, recites a hymn which brings down the swelling waters of the river. Then there is a place named Vasishṭhaśilā as an island in the midst of the River Beas, and Beas also is mentioned as the river praised by Viśvāmitra to pacify its floods. This tradition by a curious mingling of the Vedic legends and folklore was transferred in the Purāṇas to Sarasvatī as in the Vasishṭha episode outlined above.

It is worth drawing attention to a small beautiful stotra of Sarasvatī recited by Vasishṭha :—

"O Sarasvatī, your source is Brahmasara, the lake of Prajāpati-Brahmā from where you have flooded the whole world. You move with your waters as clouds in the sky ; all the waters in the world belong to you. You are Nourishment, Firmness of Will, Glory, Success, Beauty, Forgiveness, Svadhā (worship to the manes), Svāhā (worship to the gods) and Speech. The whole world is in your power."

Here we find some of those motifs which are included in the Sarasvatī Stotra in Ch. 32 of Vamāna Purāṇa and in Ch.23 of Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. This was the confluence of the Aruṇā and the Sarasvatī with which the story of Vasishṭha hes been associated.

Vasishṭha had also established there a Tīrtha sacred to the four oceans. Amongst other Tīrthas are mentioned Śatasāhasrika Tīrtha, Śatika Tīrtha, Soma Tīrtha just on the bank of Sarasvatī, Reṇukāshṭaka Tīrtha, Ṛiṇamochan Tīrtha, Ojas Tīrtha, also known as Kumārābhisheka, Pañchavaṭa Tīrtha, and this is rounded of by a restatement of the greatness of Kurukshetra repeating also the story of King Kuru performing Tapas and his dialogue with Indra.

Thereafter a Tīrtha named '*Anaraka*' is mentioned (Vn. 41. 24) which seems to be the same as '*Svarga-dvāra*' of the Āraṇyaka Parva (81.145-146). The next is Kāmyaka Vana where God Sūrya is installed as Pūshā.

Ch. 42 relates the Māhātmya of the Kāmyaka Vana. Once the Ṛishis of Naimishika-Kshetra came to have their dip in the Sarasvatī at Kāmyaka-tīrtha where the river has encircled the place and flown westward. He who bathes on the eastern side of Sarasvatī obtains the merit of Gaṅgā; on the south of Narmadā; on the west of Yamunā, and on the north of Sindhu. Thus after her whirling movement in the four directions the Sarasvatī takes a westerly course.

Next is the Vihāra-Tīrtha sacred to Kāma Deva. That was the spot where Śiva made dalliances with Pārvatī and also invited all the other Devas to come with their consorts and enjoy in that Tīrtha. Thereafter comes Durgā Tīrtha, Sarasvatī Tīrtha which is said to be the holy spot of '*Prāchī Sarasvatī*'. Auśanasa Tīrtha is mentioned again as the place sanctified by Śukra. Brahmā Tīrtha comes next, then Sthāṇu Tīrtha with a *Sahasra-liṅga* image and the Sthāṇu-vaṭa tree. The latter is also mentioned in the Āraṇyaka Parva (81. 155).

Ch. 43 begins by relating the Glory of Sthāṇu Tīrtha, Sthāṇu Vaṭa and the Sannihita Tīrtha. Once Sanatkumāra was seated under Sthāṇu Vaṭa surrounded by Vālakhilya and other Ṛishis when Mārkaṇḍeya approached him and asked the Māhātmya of Sthāneśvara together with the names of accessory Tīrthas around it. Here is a slight change in the interlocution and Mārkaṇḍeya as listener presses for a detailed account which points to the fact that this description has been borrowed by this Purāṇa from a different source. Santakumāra in reply initiates the metaphysical doctrine of Ekārṇava

Samudra and the vast Cosmic Egg (*Bṛihad-Aṇḍa*) or the Golden Egg taking its birth in the midst of that ocean.

Cosmogonial Ekārṇava Doctrine

This cosmogonical material had been avoided in the Vāmana upto now, but here we find it in a compact form enriched with relevant terminology which is consistent with the other Purāṇic formulations and requires to be explained.

At the time of dissolution the whole universe was withdrawn into the Ekārṇava Samudra. This is also known as *Salilam, Mahārṇava, Yugāanta-toya, Āpaḥ* (Bhāgavata, 8.8.23). The doctrine was originally Vedic where the primeval flood or Infinite Ocean is described as *Aprakelaṁ Salilam Tamāsīt tamasā gūḍhmagre, Apsaketaṁ Salilaṁ sarvamā idam* (RV. X. 129.3)

'The unmanifest (*Tamaḥ*) concealed within its womb the Formless manifestation (*Tamaḥ*'.

The Universe (*Idaṁ-sarvam*) then was indiscriminate (*Apraketam*) in the Primeval Waters (*Salilam*)

That was an ocean of unfathomed depth : –

अंभः किमासीद् गहनं गम्भीरं

(RV. X. 129.1)

The Ṛigveda also refers to the Primeval Ocean as the Great Waters (*Bṛihatī Āpaḥ*) —

आपो ह यद् बृहतीर विश्वमायन्
गर्भं दधाना जनयन्तीरग्निम्
ततो देवानां समवर्ततासुरेकः
कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेभ

(RV. X. 121.7.)

The Vast Waters or Expansive Floods concealed the universe within their womb and from there was born the principle of Prāṇa (*Asu*) which was the germ of all the gods. That germ was Hiraṇyagarbha. This Vedic doctrine of Ekārṇava and Hiraṇyagarbha is an oft repeated theme in the Purāṇas. The Harivaṁśa calls it Ekārṇava-vidhi and goes further in developing a few other significant terms saying that the watery ocean was enveloped by a nebulous frost :—

यथा चैकार्णवजले नीहारेण वृतान्तरे
अव्यक्त निधने लोके सर्वभूतविवर्जिते

(RV. 3.10,31)

The Vāmana Purāṇa says that the ocean enveloped by darkness was *Ghora* and the same is repeated in Harivaṁśa that the single ocean when all sentient beings or life was non-existent and everything was covered by darkness, looked formidable (Avyakta-bhīshaṇa).

The Vedic doctrine was that the First Cause of creation was all pervading and formless, undivided like the waters of one vast Ocean. Creation implies the fashioning of universes out of the waters of this ocean and these separate entities are described as so many ponds, lakes, rivers, or reservoies of water ,which maintain their individual existence during the period of *Kalpa* but lose their identity again at the time of dissolution :—

भूत्वा नारायणो योगी सप्तमूर्तिर्विभावसुः ।
गभस्तिभिः प्रदीप्ताभिः संशोषयति सागरान् ।।
पीत्वार्णवांश्च सर्वान् सनदीः कूपांश्च सर्वशः ।
पर्वतानां च सलिलं सर्वं पीत्वा च रश्मिभिः ।।
भित्वा सहस्रशश्चैव महीं नीत्वा रसातलम् ।
रसातलगतं कृत्स्नं पिबते रसमुत्तमम् ।।

(HV. 3. 9. 1–3)

Out of this cosmic flood the pendulum of Time sets again the creative process as a result of which the Golden Egg here termed as Bṛihad Aṇḍa is produced which is the source of all the seeds of all beings :—

पूर्वमेकार्णवे घोरे नष्टे स्थावर जङ्गमे
बृहदण्डमभूदेकं प्रजानां बीजसंभवम्

(Vn. 43. 17)[1]

The next point mentioned here is about Brahmā resting within the Egg for a thousand years and then waking up from sleep to fulfil the rhythm of creation. Brahmā here is the same principle as Nārāyaṇa, as defined in the other Purāas :—

एकार्णवे तु त्रैलोक्ये ब्रह्मा नारायणात्मकः ।
भोगिशय्यागतः शेते त्रैलोक्यग्रासंबृंहितः ।।

(Vishṇu 1. 3. 24)

1. For a full exposition of the Hiranynyagarbha doctrine, see my book 'Sparks from the Vedic Fire', pp. 44–28.

The energised principle of Growth or the irresistible urge for manifestation is symbolised as the waking up of Branmā or Nārāyaṇa Purusha. The Purāṇa-writer at this stage thinks of the Three Guṇas of Prakṛiti which with their characteristic qualities become agitated or thrown into tension by which movement is generated and the whole Egg is in the flux of rhythmic contraction and expansion. The Vāmana Purāṇa gives a very clear definition of the Three Guṇas.

सत्त्वोद्रिक्तस्तथा ब्रह्मा शून्यं लोकमपश्यत ।
सृष्टिं चिन्तयतस्तस्य रजसा मोहितस्य च ॥
रजः सृष्टिगुणं प्रोक्तं सत्त्वं स्थितिगुणं विदुः ।
उपसंहारकाले च प्रवर्तेत तमोगुणः ॥

(Vn. 43. 19-20).

Brahmā is primevally governed by *Sattva guṇa* and *Sattva* is distinguished by the quality of Rest (*Sthiti*). By invoking *Rajas* Brahmā begins to fill the void (*Śunya*) with fashioned forms and this is done with the help of *Rajas* which is movement and the essential factor of creation (*Srishṭi-guṇa*). When the time of dissolution or withdrawing the *Lokas* into their source comes Brahmā is dominated by the principle of *Tamas*, i. e. Darkness or Inertia where there is no activity. This was the original Vedic doctrine taken up by the Sāṁkhya philosophers and stated in the form of *Traiguṇya*. In the Ṛigveda we find the conception of the Three Purushas correponding to the Three Guṇas. Originally there existed the Avyaya Purusha called Aja, the Unborn, who corresponds to Brahmā or the principle of Stasis (*Sthiti*). The Unborn Aja creates the *Rajas* (*Rajasovimānaḥ*, the cosmos being a measuring out of *Rajas*), spoken of as two, that is black and white Rajas which are revolving like a wheel (*Vivartete rajasī chakriyeva*) and as Six (*Vi yastastambha shaḍimā rajāṁsi ajasya rūpe kimapisvadekam, RV. I. 164. 6*). We may conceive of this triadic principle as follows :—

1. Avyaya or Aja Purusha = Sattva Guṇa = Vishṇu, *Sthiti* or *Pratishṭhā*,
2. Akshara Purusha = Rajo-guṇa, Brahmā, the Creator, *Gati*.
3. Kshara Purusha = Tamas, Rudra, Inertia.

In this scheme Brahmā has two forms, firstly as Nārāyaṇa in a state of Rest (*Sthiti or Nidrā*) in which *Sattva* is predominant. Then he wakes up to activity and becomes identicied with *Rajas* or movent,

The Purāṇa next states the two aspects of Purusha, viz. transcendent (*Guṇātīta, Nirguṇa, Vyāpaka*) and secondly as Immanent (*Saguṇa, Vyāpya*) as the cosmos. In an admirable manner the identity of the Three Devas is laid down in the clearest terms :—

स ब्रह्मा स च गोविन्द ईश्वरः स सनातनः।
यस्तं वेद महात्मानं स सर्वं वेद निश्चितम ॥

(Vn. 43.22).

He is Brahmā ; He is Vishṇu ; He is Śiva ; He is the eternal Great Self (*Sanātana Mahātmā*). The author in his exalted state of mystical awareness thanks of power as *Chitta* or human consciousness or the one centre of all the Tīrthas and thus states it :—

आत्मा नदी संयमपुण्यतीर्था सत्योदका शीलशमादियुक्ता।
तस्यां स्नातः पुण्यकर्मा पुनाति न वारिणा शुद्ध्यति चान्तरात्मा ॥

(Vn. 43.25).

The essence of this strain of thought is that the self is the embodiment of all the Tīrthas, and the moral and spiritual discipline cultivated in one's own body brings to it unexcelled holiness. The ecstasy of Self-knowledge is the highest realisation to be achieved by one's conscious effort (*Ātmā saṁbodha sukhe pratishṭhām*, Vn. 43.26). Then the person becomes freed from all desires. There is no attainment to compare with unity, equality, truth, virtue, steadfastness, imposition of Vāk-daṇḍa, Kāla-daṇḍa and Manodaṇḍa on one's own life, uprightness and detachment. This is the essence of the knowledge (*Samāsīna Brahma*, Vn. 43.28). The above material is clearly set in two portions, the first dealing with Ekārṇava-vidhi (Vn. 43. 17-21) and the second with some ethical principles (Śloka 24-28) and a resumption of the cosmological material is juxtaposed thereafter.

This latter account begins with the famous verse about Nara, Nāra and Nārāyaṇa which is repeated in several Purāṇas and at many other places, its best known statement occuring in the Manu Smṛiti :—

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः।
ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायणः स्मृतः। (Manu. 1. 10.);

Vāmana. 43. 30 ; Vāyu 5. 38 ; Brahma 56.12, 60.55 ; Udyoga Parva 68.10 ; etc.

Here the first principle is named Nara which stand for Svayambhū, or the Seed-depositing Father Principle of the cosmos (*Bīja-pradaḥ Pitā,* Gītā 14...4...). The second is that of Parameshṭhī named Nāra which is the Yoni or Mother Principle fecundated by the Father :—

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन्गर्भं दधाम्यहम् । (Gītā 14. 3.)

Thus Svyambhū and Parameshṭhī, Nara and Nārāḥ (or Āpaḥ) constitute the universal parents and from their union is born Nārāyaṇa, the Hiraṇyagarbha Principle of Prāṇa from which all beings are produced. It is the basic life-principle to which the Purāṇas make reference under many different names, e. g. Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, Sūrya, Mārtaṇḍa Hiraṇyamaya Purusha, Satya, Prāna, Hiraṇyamayāṇḍa, Agni, Indra, Tejas, Vasishṭha (equal to *Āpava*), Mahān-Deva, Asu, Prajāpati, Vaiśvānara, Kāla, etc. (for explanation of some of these terms see my paper Hiraṇyagarbha, op. cit.). The next stap in this prooess of cosmic creation is stated as follows :–

विशुद्धसलिले तस्मिन्विज्ञायान्तर्गतं जगत् ।
अण्डं विभज्य भगवांस्तस्मादोमित्यजायत ॥ (Vn. 43.31)

Brahmā who lay concealed within the Egg with all the possibilities of creation caused a splitting of the Egg into two halves, the one becoming the male and the other the female. This fission of the primeval Germ was caused by the potency or miraculous power of the syllable *OM* which was the Speech of Brahmā or the Vāk of the Three Vedas as Praṇava with its three Vyāhṛitis, vis. *Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ Svaḥ* as the symbols of the trinitarrian constitution of the universe :—

ततो भूरभवत्तस्माद्भुव इत्यपरः स्मृतः ।
स्वः शब्दश्च तृतीयोऽभूद्भूर्भुवः स्वेति संज्ञिताः ॥
(Vn. 43. 32)

The creation is the manifestation of Vāk, symbol of, the Pañchabhūtas, of which Ākāśa stands for Sattva or pure stasis (*Śuddha Sthiti*), Vāyu and Agni for Rajas or activity. The Guṇas are symbolised as follows :—

1. Bhūḥ-Matter or physical material body-Pṛithivī-Agni.
2. Bhuvaḥ-Antariksha-Vāyu-Rajas-activity.
3. Svaḥ-Dyauḥ-immortality-Sattva-Jyotiḥ.

These three are known as Vyāhṛitis, i. e. utterances of the Creator as the three forms of Speech, viz. *Paśyantī, Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī*, quite well known in the metaphysical doctrine of Vāk or Śabda. Manifestaticon is governed by these three tensions in the utterance of sound which is the attribute of Ākāśa and is therefore the symbol of Matter, for Ākāśa also is one of the *Pañcha-bhūtas* and therefore material. Vāk or Śabda is one of the forms of primeval energy which comes within the orbit of physical experience; according to modern science sound requires a material medium for transmission (whereas other forms of energy can travel in a vacuum.)

Within the womb of the Egg an active principle is produced which is known in Vedic terminology as Hiraṇya and here referred to as Tejas which is described in the Gāyatrī Mantra as '*Tat savitur vareṇyaṁ bhargo devasya dhīmahi*', that is the divine splendour, *Devasya bhargaḥ* which has its origin from Savitā, the impelling urge in the mind of the Creator. That Tejas is also called Abhiddha Tapas (RV. X. 190. 1), Agraja Tapas (primeval heat), Devaushṇya (Divine Temperature, or Ūshman, or Agni blazing in the furnace of the Primeval Vulcan God, Brahmṇaspati, who was forging the different Devas or divine powers of earth and heaven on his anvil like a smith seated before his furnace :—

ब्रह्मणस्पतिरेता: सं कर्मार इवाधमत् ।

(RV. X. 72. 2)

The Tejas or life-principle which emanated from the body of Nārāyaṇa Purusha is here referred to as Aṇu, a mere speck or spark of fire reminding of the Upanishadic statement :—

यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद्विस्फुलिङ्गाः
सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।
तथाक्षराद्विविधाः सौम्य भावाः
प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ॥

(Muṇḍaka Up. 2. 1. 1.)

This cosmic temperature was inconceivably great from which not only our Sūrya but millions and billions of other Sūryas have originated. In the midst of the primeval ocean this Fire began to consume the waters of the enveloping floods and as a result of that the embryonic germ (*Kalala*) was produced which later on developed as a *Budbuda*, watery bubble, the same as the foetus which is

also the visible symbol of life or *Aṇḍa-Srishṭi*. This embryonic watery mass gets solidified (*Kāṭhinya*) and the same ultimately becomes Pṛithivī, the earth which is the symbol of motherhood or the mother-principle which processes the embryo and gives birth to the Babe, or the manifest form of life in Matter :

तेजसा शोषितं शेषं कललत्वमुपागतम् ।
कललाद् बुद्बुदं ज्ञेयं ततः काठिन्यतां गतम् ॥
काठिन्याद्धरिणी ज्ञेया भूतानां धारिणी हि सा ।

(Vn. 43. 34-35).

In the style of esoteric etymology (Paroksha Nirukti), this emergence of the phenomenon of solid material form with the Prāṇic or life-principle becoming manifest in it, is associated with the word *Sannihita* which also means solidification or becoming compact and was the name of a lake in Kurukshetra. The Purāṇa-writer using bold imagination goes to the extent of stating that the *Sannihita* lake is the very spot where the cosmic Egg was deposited :—

यस्मिन् स्थाने स्थितं ह्यण्डं तस्मिन्सन्निहितं सरः ।

We have already stated that the original spark issuing from the energy of Nārāyaṇa Purusha or Brahmā is also spoken of as Sūrya or Āditya as etymologically countenanced in the Purāṇa :—

यदाद्यं निःसृतं तेजस्तस्मादादित्य उच्यते ।

(Vn. 43.36)

Brahmā himself is born out of the Egg as the energy of Nārāyaṇa thrown out of his navel and seated on the top of the world-lotus. Here is a new idea, of course mentioned in the Matsya and in the other Purāṇas, viz. that the Golden mountain Meru was the amnion or enveloping film (*Ulba*) round the foetus and the other mountains became the chorion or the outer membrane (*Jarāyu*) to which the umblical cord is joined at the other end. In other Purāṇas the idea is made a little more explicit. The Hiraṇya or Gold within the Egg is Prāṇa and by its developing potency more and more of liquid is accumulated or drawn within the orbit of the Prāṇic centre and that is known as the Golden Sap (*Hiraṇyaṁskannam*).

हिरण्यमस्तु यो मेरुस्तस्योल्बं स्कन्नमात्मनः ।
गर्भोदकं समुद्राश्च जराय्वस्थीनि पर्वताः ॥

(Vāyu 4.80.)

The Prāṇic concentration is symbolised as Meru, the mountain of Gold from whose four-fold *Svastika* the whole cosmos is created as described in the *Bhuvanakośa*; and here in the individual centre a complete organism symbolised as the other mountains becomes developed. It is a grand imagery to compare the waters of the ocean with the amniotic fluid (*Garbhodaka*) in which the cosmic Egg is nurtured.

It is imagined that the water in the *Sannihita* lake is comparable to the fluid from the navel of Brahmā and the *Vaṭa Vṛiksha* marks tha centre of its extension. The four *Varṇas* have been produced by Brahmā intent upon creating these creatures. The primeval pattern of creation is spoken of in the Vedas as *Prāṇa Sṛishṭi*, creation on the level of *Prāṇa* and *Prāṇa* is designated as the *Ṛishi* principle :—

असदेव सोम्य इदमग्र आसीत किन्तद् असिदिति ऋषयो वा तदसत्।
के ते ऋषयः प्राणावाव ऋषयः यदऽरिषंस्तस्माद् ऋषयः ॥

(ŚB. 6.1.1.1.)

The principle of *Prāṇa* is termed *Ṛishi* because of its having the nature of movement, from the root *ṛish gatau,* to go or move. The primary creation of Brahmā is described as that of the *Vālakhilya Ṛishis* of pure effulgent form (*Śuddhi-rūpiṇah*) and who were *Urdhva-Retasaḥ,* characterised by perpetual chastity and therefore incapable of producing life in matter (*Maithunī Sṛishṭi*). Their number is here stated to be 88,000, but 60,000 elsewhere. According to Brāhmaṇa literature *Vāla-khilya* is synonymous with *Prāṇa* :—

Prāṇā Vālakhilyāḥ, AB. 6. 26; *Prāṇā vai Vāla-khilyāḥ* AB. 6. 28, and ŚB. 8. 3. 4. 1.

Prāṇas are called *Vāla-khilya* because not a hair-breadth of intervening space separates them as in the case of Matter. The *Prāṇas* are conceived of as a continuous network of forces or energy whereas their opposite, viz. the material substances are discontinuous.

When Brahmā found that the mind-born (*Mānasāḥ*) *Vālakhilya Ṛishis* did not procreate, he produced the four other mind-born Ṛishis, viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, and Sanatkumāra and they too turned eternal Brahmachārins and did not produce progeny. These four *Kumāras* are the archetypal principles of the four-fold scheme of creation called *Chatushpāda* and later on described as *Pradhāna, Mahat, Ahaṅkāra* and *Viśesha.*

Brahmā then launched upon a new scheme by creating the *Saptarshis* who became *Prajāpatis*, i. e. founders of *Gotras*. The one principle of creation must become divided into seven typified as the Seven Ṛishis, namely, Kaśyapa, Atri, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Vasishṭha.

Thereafter the motif of the *Vālakhilya Ṛishis* is brought in again and they are described as performing hard penances which reduced their body to mere skeletons. These later *Vālakhilyas* are referred to as of dense intellect (*Mūḍha-buddhayaḥ*) living just like logs of wood and clods of earth :—

काष्ठलोष्ठसमाः स्थिताः । (Vn. 43. 56)

Śiva was not moved by their sham austerities but Pārvatī took compassion on them and interceded on their behalf. She was asked by Śiva to put them to test and Pārvatī actually found that their *Tapas* was only for show. She reported that to Śiva who, leaving her behind, himself went near the Ṛishis in the form of a nude Bramachārin holding a begging bowl in hand. Their wives became enamoured of him, thus infuriating the Ṛishis and they rushed at Śiva using cudgels against him and pelting him with stones, which resulted in causing his *Ūrdhva-Retas* form becoming converted into that of *Liṅga-patana*.

With the *Liṅga-patana* of Śiva there was great consternation in the world and the *Munis* also were greatly distressed. One of them, wiser than others, said that they were ignorant of the true nature of the great *Tapasvī* who had come to them and so they should ask Brahmā about his real nature. There after those *Munis* and the other *Devas* approached Brahmā who reprimanded them for not knowing the *Dharma* and for so letting their minds be darkened by anger. Brahmā explained to them that the real *Sthāṇu* was the great Self within their own bodies and that *Ātman* is without beginning and end:–

योऽसावात्मनि देहेऽस्मिन्विभुर्नित्यो व्यवस्थितः ।
सोऽनादिः स महास्थाणुः पृथक्त्वे परिसूचितः ।। (Vn. 43. 79-80)

The whole trend of this story carries within it an implied significance. Those who are depicted here as sham *Munis* were the Buddhist *Bhikshus* who did not understand the true significance of Liṅga

and fell a prey to moral lapses, even taking recourse to sex-perversions. Notwithstanding the fact that they apparently derided Liṅga worhsip, the women folk in their camp were seen over-powered by erotic impulses. It is this hypocricy found amongst their order that is brought to light in this satirical incident. These women were the *Bhikshuṇīs* whose morals were unregenerate. So when those sham *Munis* approached Brahmā he instructed them in the true way of *Varṇāśrama-Dharma* according to which one performs the ordained duties of the house-holder's life and thus obtains the objective of true renunciation. The doctrine of *Karma*, upheld by the Buddhists, is also now expounded by Brahmā in a new manner stressing its real meaning and application to hard facts of Life, viz. each individual is governed by the tendency of his good or evil *Karma* and should strive to purge oneself of their past impressions :—

मनसो भेदमाश्रित्य कर्मभिश्चोपचीयते ।
ततः कर्मवशाद्भुङ्क्ते यद्भोगान्स्वर्गकारकान् ॥ (Vn. 43. 81-82)

Thereafter we find the *Pāśupata* doctrine of *Mala-viśodhana*, i.e. carrying out a programme of purifying the body and mind of accummulated sin, recommended as the correct method of bringing new knowledge into one's life.

तन्मनः शोधयेद्धीमान् ज्ञानयोगमुपक्रमैः । (Vn. 43. 82)

Here is a clear reference to the methods of Sāṁkhya and Yoga for disciplining the Self. It is stated that external physical practices are useless without a corresponding purification of the mind. For achieving this, regular practices (*Kriyā*) are prescribed, which appear to be a reference to the Pāśupata method of observing *Vratas* and *Mahāvratas*, but for those who cannot practise them, the royal road of *Varṇāśrama Dharma* has been taught :—

यस्मादत्याविलं देहं न शीघ्रं शुद्ध्यते किल ।
तेन लोकेषु मार्गोऽयं सत्पथस्य प्रवर्तकः ॥ (Vn. 43. 85)

The Buddhist way of life was preached as *Sad-Dharma*, but they did not believe in the *Varṇas* and *Āśramas* which was the way of the *Bhāgavatas* who styled the *Varṇāśrama* ideal as *Satpatha*, the Right Way.'

A further veiled reference to the Buddhist approach towards life may be seen in the following line :—

निमित्तं मोहमाहात्म्यं निह्नवोत्तमभागिनाम् । (Vn. 43. 86)

The word '*Ninhava*' stands for suspicion, doubt in the reality of the world or its values and the Buddhist point of view of *Anālambana* was in the eyes of the *Bhāgavatas* the worst kind of negation and nihilism which rendered the soul and the spiritual values quite barren. The Bhāgavata teachers condemned the Buddhists as seized by *Moha* in its accursed yet most powerful form which is mentioned here as the approach of their whole philosophical outlook. This is also mentioned in the Vishṇu Purāṇa in the story of *Māyā-Moha*, that is Vishṇu incarnating as Buddha for deluding the *Asuras*, and also in the Liṅga Purāṇa where Śāstā, i.e. Buddha is mentioned as *Māyī* and his doctrine as *Māyāmaya-Śāstra* which was delusive in all aspects (*Sarva-sammohana*, Liṅga Purāṇa 1. 71. 74-76). Brahmā points out that those *Munis* although they had entered the *Āśrama*, i.e. *Vihāra* or monastery, still they were afflicted by both *Kāma* and *Krodha*. From the *Bhāgavata* point of view the formality of entering the state of *Bhikshuhood* was quite unnecessary because for a man of wisdom his home was as good as an *Āśrama* or hermitage in the forest :—

ज्ञानिनामाश्रमो वेश्म वेश्माश्रममयोगिनाम् । (Vn. 43. 87).

'For the *Jñānī* his home is transformed verily as an Āśrama, but for *Kuyogin* even the *Āśrama* becomes a place of indulgence'. Brhmā makes a further hit :—

क्व च न्यस्तसमस्तेच्छा क्व च नारीमयो भ्रमः ।
क्व क्रोध ईदृशो घोरो येनात्मानं न जानथ ॥ (Vn. 43. 88)

'What is this, your way of giving up all desires and yet falling a prey to the delusion of women ? Your falling into the clutches of anger and sex is your real *Moha*.'

Brahmā proceeded with them to the abode of Śiva on Kailāśa and pleased him with a Stotra (Vn. 44. 5-8). Śiva exhorted them to install the Śiva-Liṅga and worship it as the highest way of *Dharma*. This is certainly the doctrine of the *Pāśupata* teachers about *Liṅgārchana* held by them in the highest esteem. And so they were directed by Śiva to

proceed to *Sthāṇu Tīrtha* and reinstall the Liṅga which they had destroyed. Hearing this, the *Munis* and others wanted to carry the Liṅgam from the Dāru-vana forest where it was installed in the Himālayas but they were unable to do so, and so they were advised by Brahmā again to approach Śiva as he alone being propitiated could transport the Liṅga. The Munis went there and could not see Śiva with their naked eyes. Then Pārvatī taking pity on them advised them to drink the *Amṛita* waters of the *Mānasa* Lake by which they were able to have a sight of Śiva in the form of an elephant. Here we are treated to two symbols, viz. *Mānasarovara* which was the Lake of Brahmā and the source of Vedas, the ambrosial wisdom of which was accepted by the heterodox Munis as the Anavatapta Lake of the Buddha. The second motif is the form of an elephant assumed by Siva which was also taken by the Buddha. Śiva carried the Liṅga in the form of an elephant to the spot of the *Sthāneśvara* Pond in Kurukshetra. He was then praised by the Munis and the Devas with a *Stotra* in prose style consisting of a string of choicest epithets (94 in number) very similar to the *Stotra* of Vishṇu (in Ch. 26 of 100 epithets). This was a special style of *Namaḥ Stotra* of which there are several brilliant examples in Brāhmanical literature, e.g. Mahābhārata, Nārāyaṇīya Parva (Ch. 325) of Śāntī-parva. It appears that there were two kinds of such Namaḥ-Stotras, (i) one of about hundred names called *Śata-nāma Stotra* and (ii) the other of one thousand names called *Sahasra-nāma Stotra*, for example, the *Stotra* recited by Vena to Sthāneśvara Śiva in Ch. 47. The epithets in these *Stotras* need a special interpretative study by themselves which would demonstrate the unity of religious thought from the Vedic to the Purāṇic times.

Distinctive Vedic epithets for the corpus of this Stotra are, e. g. Mahā-Kshetrajña, Mahā-Purusha, Mahādeva, Īśāna, Tryambaka, Para-Brahman, Paraṁjyotiḥ, Oṁkāra, Vashaṭkāra, Svāhākāra, Svadhākāra, Sarva-deva, Aja, Sahasreshī, Sahasrārchī, Sudhāman, Agnī-Shomātmaka, Pavitra Mahā-pavitra, Haṁsa, Parama-haṁsa, Mahārājika, Hiraṇyavāha, Hiraṇyaretaḥ, Hiraṇyanābha, Hiraṇyāgrakeśa Mahā-Yajña, Mahā-Yājñika, Sarva-Yajña-maya, Sarva-Yajña-Saṁstuta, Trilochana, Umāśarīrārdhadhara, Pinākadhara. The writer was conscious of the metaphysical nature of Śiva combining the two princi-

12

ples of Agni and Soma on the basis of which he is described as *Ardha-nārīśvara* or *Umā-Maheśvara.* The doctrine of *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajña* which is defined in the Gītā was of Vedic origin and the transcendant Purusha is described as Mahā-Kshetrajña, the Supreme Knower of the Field. The way that these epithets were explained is given in the Purāṇas themselves under the caption of *Nāma-nirukti* (Liṅga Purāṇa 1.70.96-106 ; Matsya Ch. 248.29-51 ; Śānti Parva 330. 1-67, 328.34-51 ; Vāyu 5.39-46, 4.25-45, *Paryāyavāchakaiḥ śabdaiḥ tattvamādyam anuttamaṁ, Vyākhyātaṁ tattvabhāvajñairevaṁ sadbhāva-chintakaiḥ* ; Udyoga Parva Ch. 68). The Purāṇa writers were drawing upon the reserve of Vedic names and attributes of the deity convinced of the underlying unity of the various forms and names based on *Guṇa-Karma* (Śānti Parva 328). The best example in classical literature of the semantic etymology of Divine Names is found in Śaṅkara's commentary of the Vishṇu-Sahasranāma.

Ch. 45 reverts to the subject of the glory of *Sannihita-Tīrtha* which was close by the *Sthāṇu Tīrtha.* A strange story is related about the Lake. It is said that the gods were frightened by the crowds of pilgrims coming to bathe in the *Sannihita* pond and so Brahmā advised them to choke it up with earth. Hence there was a rain of dust which gutted a large part of the pond. This is a very strange and interesting information confirmed by the present conditions of the big pond in *Thāneśvara* of which a large portion has become filled up with earth and it seems that the Purāṇa writer also found it in the same condition. Even then the sanctity of the place continued in popular mind and the Śiva Liṅga and the Tree on its bank continued to be worshipped as they are said to have been saved by Śiva :—

करेण धारयामास लिंगं तीर्थवटं तथा । (Vn. 45. 12)

Another interesting fact stated is that the original Śiva Liṅga was replaced by a new stone Śiva Liṅga as the earlier image had been buried by the accummulating earth :—

पूरितं च ततो दृष्ट्वा ऋषयः सर्वे एव ते ।
पांशुना सर्वगात्राणि स्पृशन्ति श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ॥ (Vn. 45. 15)

This renovation may be attributed to the Pāśupatas who came and worshipped not only the Liṅgam but also besmeared their bodies with

the dust of the place. The Purāṇa writer mentions seven restorations of the original Śiva Liṅga successively (Vn. 45. 21). Another phenomenon, which probably owed itself to the advancing deserts, is stated that in Kusukshetra sand-dunes were blown by strong winds :—

पांशवोऽपि कुरुक्षेत्रे वायुना समुदीरिताः ।

(Vn. 45. 23)

It appears that a correct climatic tradition about Kurukshetra is recorded here. In days of much greater antiquity Kurukshetra seems to have been a wet region blessed with innumerable ponds formed by the drainage of small rain-water rivulets losing themselves in the sand. The name *Kuru Jāṅgala* tract of the *Kuru* region and also the mention of the seven forests (*Saptavanāni*, in Ch. 34. 4-5) points to the then possible abundance of vegetation. We are aware that conditions of humidity once prevailed all along the lower course of the Sarasvatī in north Bikaner upto the Gupta period when the flourishing settlements like Raṅga Mahal and others were located along its banks, but later on the Rajasthan Desert began to lick up the area with its flaming tongues and conditions of dessication moved towards the east until they reached Kurukshetra and turned the same into a barren tract of sand overgrown with Pīlu, Śamī and acacia trees. This phenomenon may have taken several centuries, probably between the fourth and seventh century A.D. The people of Thāneśvara and other holy places in Kurukshetra which were once associated with big ponds, felt helpless against the advancing dunes of sand and their piteous cry is faithfully recorded by the Purāṇa writer. A gradual contraction of the holy area of the lakes also seems to be recorded in the statement that in the times of Kṛita-yuga the Lake was called *Sannihita*, then *Vāyu* (sic ! *Vāpī*) Lake, and finally it was reduced to a *Kūpa* known as *Rudrahrada* (45. 29).

Ch. 46 has preserves a detailed account of the numerous Śiva Liṅgas that were installed near about the main Śiva Liṅga of Sthāṇu-Īśvara. It was the practice while naming each Śiva Liṅga to add the word Īśvara at the end of its appellation. We find that mentioned in the Mathurā Inscription of the *Pāśupata* teachers recording the names of two Śiva Liṅgas called *Uditeśvara* and *Kapileśvara* installed by Kapilāchārya and Uditāchārya. The *Pāśupatas* seem to have made it a rule for naming their Śive Liṅgas. Clear evidence is furnished here

of the hand of *Pāśupata* teachers in reorganizing the Sthāneśvara Tīrtha, for it is stated that four Śiva Liṅgas were installed on the four sides of Sthāṇu-Iśvara the western one of which was called Nakuleśvara, which undoubtedly was consecrated and established by the Pāśupata Śaivas who were followers of Lakulīśa. Mathurā was a great centre of the *Lakulīśa* sect in 380 A. D. as shown by the Mathurā Inscription of the reign of Chandragupta Vikramāditya mentioned above. From the account of Bāṇa in the Harsha-charita it is evident that the Pāśupata teachers had spread their influence upto Śrīkaṇṭha Janapada or the Thāneśvara region. Reading through the lines one can see that this very elaborate and detailed description of Sthāṇu Iśvara and its associated holy places must have been the work of the *Pāśupata Śaivas* who glorified Śiva by many a legend and that account has floated into the text of the Vāmana Purāṇa which originally was a Vaishṇava treatise.

A list of the Śiva Liṅgas in this chapter is as follows :—Śukleśvara, Vyomeśvara, Daksheśvara, Nakuleśvara, Umeśvara, Taksheśvara, Viśvakarmeśvara, Sārasvateśvara (*Tatraiva liṅga rūpeṇa sthitā devī Sarasvatī*, Vn. 46.7), Vaṭeśvara. Nakulīśa-gaṇeśvara, Rudrākareśvara, Gokarṇeśvara, Meghanādeśvara, Kumbhakarṇeśvara, Kumāreśvara, Vibhīshṇeśvara, Purṇeriteśvara, Hastipādeśvara, Hārīteśvara, Kaṅkālarūpeśvara, Siddheśvara, Mṛikaṇḍeśvara, Ādityeśvara, Chitrāṅgadeśvara, Rambheśvara, Vajreśvara, Parāśareśvara, Vedavyāseśvara, Himavateśvara, Kārtavīryeśvara, Hanumateśvara, Sudarśaneśvara, Indreśvara, Purāṇeśvara, Svāyambhuveśvara. In addition to these there were a thousand Śiva Liṅgas upto Oghavaṭī river in the north. This is probably a reference to a *Sahasra Liṅga* image.[1] On the eastern side Rudra-koṭi Śiva Liṅga was installed by Vālakhilyas and innumerable Śiva Liṅgas were installed by Yakshas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas, in the south. According to Vāyu Purāṇa there are three and a half crores of Śiva Liṅgas near *Sannihita* pond. It is also stated that Sthāṇu Śiva Liṅga was installed by Brahmā on the 13th day of dark half of Chaitra in an auspicious moment :—

चैत्र मासे त्रयोदश्यां दिव्यनक्षत्रयोगतः ।
शुक्रार्कचन्द्रसंयोगे दिने पुण्यतमे शुभे ॥ (Vn. 46. 59)

1. Image in which a thousand Liṅgas are depicted on one obelisk.

Ch. 47 continues the topic of *Sthāṇu Māhātmya* but with a new preamble relating to cosmogony. The *Ekārṇava* doctrine is re-introduced in which Brahmā was born from the navel of Vishṇu. From Brahmā was born Marīchi and from Marīchi Kaśyapa. From Kaśyapa Sūrya and from Sūrya Manu, and from the sneezing of Manu was born a son whose name is not given but probably Ikshvāku. He was the father of Vena who grew to be a wild ruler, a heretic opposed to the Vedas. In his arrogance he issued a proclamation banning all Yajñas, gifts, and holding that there was no other god than himself, and asked everyone to pay homage only to him. The Ṛishis became infuriated and protested that Yajña was essential for life as typifying the divine ordinance and the whole world is sustained by Yajña with which the Devas are propitiated. The Ṛishis struck the king with the miraculous power of their exorcised *Kuśa* grass and the people also were on their side. Then the Ṛishis churned the left hand of the ruler from which the brood of the Nishāda maraudars were produced. The Ṛishis again churned the right hand or the rightists from whom was born a resplendent being holding bow and arrow and the *Chakradhvaja* banner. He was anointed as king of the earth by the Devas and he protected the earth with *Dharma* :—

ततः स रञ्जयामास धर्मेण पृथिवीं तदा। (Vn. 47. 23.)

ततो राजेति शब्दोऽस्य पृथिव्या रञ्जनादभूत्॥ (Vn. 47. 24.)

Here is a statement about the ideal of kingship that was accepted in the Gupta age and that is repeated in several Purāṇas :—

प्रजानां रञ्जनाच्चैव राजानस्त्वभवन्नृपाः। (Vāyu 57. 58).

पित्रापरंजितास्तस्य प्रजास्तेनानुरंजिताः।
ततो राजेति नामास्य ह्यनुरागादजायत॥
(Brahmāṇḍa, Pūrva Bhāga, Anushanga-pāda 2. 36, 155-56)

वत्स! राज्येभिषिक्तेन प्रजारञ्जनमादितः। (Mārkaṇḍeya 27. 4)

पृथुं वैन्यं प्रजा दृष्ट्वा रक्ताः स्मेति यदाब्रुवन्।
ततो राजेति नामस्य अनुरागादजायत॥ (Śānti Parva 29. 131).

Kālidāsa also mentions it twice as the prevailing ideal of his times :—

यथा प्रह्लादनाच्चन्द्रः प्रतापात्तपनो यथा ।
तथैव सोऽभूदन्वर्थो राजाप्रकृतिरञ्जनात् ॥

(Raghu. 4. 12 ; also 6.21)

The story of king Vena as an oppressive ruler and of his son Pṛithu as the upholder of the ideal of *Dharma* was a favourite theme of the Purāṇa writers which has been repeated with general applause and it was accepted by the political jurists of the age as a theme to vindicate the rights of the subjects to depose an oppressive king. In the Atharva Veda the motif of Pṛithu milking the earth for the sake of the people is found employed at great length, and the Purāṇas with that background have given a new interpretation to the legend (see my book 'Mastya Purāṇa—A Study, pp. 79-83). Here in the Vāmana the major part of the milking motif is left out and the story is adapted to exalt the glory of *Sannihita* lake where Vena the evil king suffering from the curse of leprosy and born among the *Mlechchhas* took a bath in the holy waters and was purified.

A short inset is given here of a dog appearing at the Sthāṇu Tīrtha who was freed of his sin of eating away the temple money in a previous birth as a *Kaula* teacher ; this is obviously a pointed hit by the Pāśupatas at the Kaulas.

While Vena was thus purified by a bath in the Sthāṇu lake he recited a *Sahasranāma Stotra* in honour of Śiva (Vn. 47. 62-162).

The compilation of a *Sahasranāma stotra* appears to be an arduous task which must have involved the author in a prolonged concentrated study of the Vedic and classical literature for extracting an extensive lists of epithets and strings of names of the various gods and goddesses, that were later carefully sifted for being cast or re-arranged in the form of a *Sahasranāma Stotra.*

A *Stotra* was conceived as a *Vāg-Yajña* (Śānti Parva 47. 63). The transcendant or infinite Speech was spoken of in the Vedas as *Sahasrāksharā* or Thousand-Syllabled (RV. 1.164.43, *Sahasrāksharā Parame Vyoman*), and this was translated into the idea of a *Sahasranāma stotra.* It was like an offering of a garland of thousand lotuses पुण्डरीक-सहस्रेण स्रगस्य शुशुभे शुभा. Matsya 247.30, also Matsya 179.51 and Ahirbudhnya

Saṁhitā, 21.71 naming it as *Mahā-sraj* and *Sarasija-pariklriptā divyā mālā*, known as *Kiṁjalkinī*, Devī Māhātmya 5.49). Just as the deity was worshipped by offering a thousand flowers or lamps or by *Sahasra ghaṭa* (*Sahasra ghaṭābhiśeka*) or by offering a thousand flowers of semi-precious stones (*Ratna-pushpa*) or of gold (*Svarṇa-pushpa*), similarly the motif of the *Sahasranāma Stotra* to worship the deity was evolved in the Gupta period. The underlying idea was that the deity is one, but for the full manifestation of his splendour, his one Self multiplies a thousand-fold (*Sahasradhātmā vyaruchad vibhaktaḥ*, Raghu.6.5.). Each name in the *Stotra* is like a ray of that divine glory or a form of the deity concretised as word.

There was also a definite technique of composing a *Sahasranāma Stotra* by taking one epithet from each of his thousand-fold aspects (*Sahasradhātma*). We have a specimen in the *Bhīshma-Stavarāja* (Śānti Parva, Ch. 47), from which names or epithets for the deiry's numerous forms could be collected. The different forms found there are :—

1. Sūryātmā, 2. Somātmā, 3. Geyātmā, Vedātmā, Yajñātmā Stotrātmā, Haṁsātmā, Satyātmā, Dharmātmā, Kshetrātmā, Sāṁkhyātmā, Yogātmā, Mokshātmā, Ghorātmā, Māyātmā, Yoga-nidrātmā, Padmātmā, Toyātmā. Kālātmā, Varṇātmā, Lokātmā Gotrātmā, Prāṇātmā, Viśvātmā, Mohātmā, Jñanātmā, Chintyātuā, Brahmātmā, Rudātmā, Śantātmā, Śarvātmā (Śānti Parva 47, 23-54).

The Śiva Sahasranāma stotra recited by Vena in the Vāmana Purāṇa occurs also in the Vāyu (30. 181-280) where it is attributed to Daksha. The Vāyu version seems to be the original one, later borrowed in Brahma. (40. 1-100), where it is called a Sahasranāma (*Nāmnāṁ chāsṭa sahasreṇa stutavān vṛishabhdhvajam*, Brahma 39. 97). It was also borrowed in the Mahābhārata (Śānti Parva 284, Poona Edition, Appendix 1, No. 28, pp. 2058-2072).

There is another Śiva Sahasranāma attributed to Taṇḍī now found in the Liṅga (I. 65. 54-168) and Anuśāsana Parva (17. 31-153). it seems originally to have belonged to the Liṅga. There is a third Sahasranāmastotra of Śiva recited by Vishṇu now preserved in the Liṅga Purāṇa (1. 98. 21-159).

After Vena had praised Śiva with the *Sahasranāma Stotra*, the great Lord was pleased appeared before Vena saying that he would

be born as *Andhaka* in his next life where because of the influence of the sin that accrued in previous life he would be pierced by the trident of the deity and then be reborn in the next life as *Bhṛiṅgiriṭi Gaṇa* and would be permitted to enjoy the privilege of living near him.

Then a long description of the Māhātmya of the Sthānesvara Liṅga and of the holy lake of Sannihita is retold in Chs. 48 and 49. It is stated that Brahmā who had incurred the sin of falling in love with his daughter in the beginning of creation was advised to bathe in the holy pond of Thāneśvara and thereby wash off his sin. We have explained the symbolism of Brahmā's love for his daughter, named variously as Śatarūpā, Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī, etc. in our Study of Matsya Purāṇa. Brahmā's daughter is his primeval energy or potency for creation and it is essential that the Father should deposit his seed in the Divine Mother so that the process of creation may be initiated, It is all a description of the primeval ordinances of creation on the level of the Creator's mind (*Tāni Dharmāṇi prathamanyāsan*, Purusha Sukta, RV. 10. 90. 16). Without the Creator entering with the totality of his powers into the creative process by which the cosmos is produced there can be no manifestation whatsoever. This is called the doctrine of *Anu-praveśa* which alone has been the meaning and contents of the legend of Brahmā and of Śatarūpā or Sarasvatī.

Ch. 49 amplifies the same theme of the glorification of the Sannihita Tīrtha and the Sthāneśvara Liṅga.

The previous chapter was devoted to the exalted praise of a Śiva Liṅga known as Chaturmukheśvara after the four faces of God Brahmā situated on the north bank of the Sarasvatī. In Ch. 50, the account shifts to the Māhātmya of the Pṛithūdaka Tīrtha which was declared by Śiva to be the foremost on earth. A description of the Pitṛis who had come to take a holy bath in Prithūdaka is given stating that their mind-born daughter was Menā. She was married to Himālaya.

Ch. 51 continues the account of Menā saying that she became the mother of three daughters and one son. Her eldest daughter was named Rāgiṇī, the second one Kuṭilā and the third Kālī, the son being called Sunābha.

A dialogue between Brahmā and the second daughter Kuṭilā ensues. Brahmā told her that she would not be able to bear in her

womb the seed of Śiva hearing which she got angry and said that she would propitiate Vishṇu and subdue Śiva. Thereupon Brahmā's anger cursed her and kept her in the bonds of Ṛig, Yaju, Sīma and Atharva flowing as a river in heaven only. The first daughter Rāgavatī or Rāgiṇī was presented by the gods to Brahmā and with her also a similar dialogue and fraying of tempers occurred. She pronounced a curse on Brahmā declaring that even without marriage with Šiva her son would be powerful enough to destroy the Asura Mahisha. Brahmā cursed her to become the evening dusk of red colour.

Seeing that her two daughters performing *Tapas* had been taken away by the gods, Menā dissuaded her youngest daughter from performing *Tapas* who for that reason became known as Umā (literally 'Don't'), but the young maiden having love for Śiva did not listen to her mother's exhortation and began to perform severe austerties for Śiva's sake. Brahmā asked Devas to go to Pārvatī and bring her to heaven but the Devas were foiled in her presence and reported to Brahmā accordingly, who sent them away. Then Himālaya her father brought her home.

At this juncture Śiva who had no abode till then came to Himālaya and was invited by the Mountain to take his permanent seat there.

The story of the three sisters is a motif deliberatly introduced to explain the idea of the Three Mothers or the Three Sisters who in Yoga are known as Iḍā, Piṅgalā and Sushumnā. The sister that was turned into the form of a river represents Iḍā and the other Piṅgalā. They could not have borne the seed of Śiva but that is achieved by Sushumnā symbolised as Pārvatī, who is the real counterpart of Śiva and is his female energy.

Having learnt of Śiva's presence in a hermitage on the Himālaya, Kālī approached him in great reverence with her female companion. She stayed there for some time but Śiva considering that it was not proper to entertain her, disappeared. This reinforced Pārvatī in her resolution and she took permission from her father to enter on a course of still more rigorous penances. Here the same story as related by Kālidāsa in the Kumāra Saṁbhava is retold, viz. Umā or Lalitā worshipping Śiva, performing penances to obtain him, Śiva appearing

in the guise of a Brahmachārin and the dialogue between the two. Umā enquired as to the place of residence of the young Brahmachāri to which he replied that his home was in Vārāṇasi but he was going on a pilgrimage to Pṛithūdaka. Umā asked him why he had chosen to go to Pṛithūdaka. Śiva replied that he had been to Prayāga, Kubjāmra (*Kanakhala*), Jayanta, Chaṇḍikeśvara, Bandhuvṛinda, Karkandha and Kanakhala, Sarasvatī, Agni-Kuṇḍa, Bhadrā, Trivishṭapa, Kaunaṭa, Koṭitīrtha and Takshaka, and now intended to go to Pṛithūdaka. Thereafter Śiva puts a number of queries to Pārvatī which are the same as in Kumāra Saṁbhava. In the ensuing dialogue even the very words of Kālidāsa have been taken by the Purāṇa writer :—

निवार्यतामयं भिक्षुर्विवक्षुः स्फुरिताधरः ।
न तथा निन्दकः पापी यथा श्रोता शशिप्रभे ॥ (Vn. 51. 67)

Ultimately Śiva became pleased with her answers and disclosed his identity saying that the earthen Śiva Liṅga (*Mriṇamayeśvara*) would become known as Bhadreśvara and that he would depute the Saptarshis and Arundhatī to Himālaya to negotiate the wedding. Having said so Śiva went to Pṛithūdaka and after taking his bath returned to the Mandara mountain.

Ch. 52 takes up the story of Śiva's wedding proposal with Pārvatī conveyed through the Saptarshis to Himālaya. It follows closely the theme as narrated by Kālidāsa. The Seven Sages with Arundhatī approached Himālaya on the Giri-Prastha and were ushered into his presence by his door-keeper Gandha-Mādana. They were greeted by Himālaya with due ceremony and on being asked the purpose of their visit they conveyed to him through Ṛishi Aṅgiras, the proposal of bestowing his daughter Kālī, on Śiva :—

याचितारो वयं शर्वो वरो दाता त्वमप्युमा ।
वधूः सर्वजगन्माता कुरु यच्छ्रेयसे तव ॥ (Vn. 52. 41)

Himālaya then convened a small conference of his principal kinsmen, viz. Meru and other mountains and also his wife, Menā and asked their approval for the proposal brought by the Ṛishis. All acclaimed his words saying that the son born of that union would slay the demon Mahisha and others. Himālaya then communicated to Kālī that she had been offered to Śiva in marriage. He also requested the Sages to fix an auspicious moment for celebrating the wedding

which should be marked by *Jāmitra-Guṇa* (Vn. 62. 60-61), a word used also in Kālīdāsa's Kumārasambhava (7. 1.), denoting the seventh house in the horoscope.

The Ṛishis conveyed the message to Śiva on the Mandara mountain who invited all the gods to join the marriage party. Thereafter the Divine Mother Aditi, Surabhi, mother of the Eleven Rudras and other Goddesses embellished Śiva's body in a befitting manner.

The party comprised *Gaṇa* hosts in the vanguard, then other gods headed by Agni, Vishṇu and Brahmā. Yamunā on her tortoise and Sarasvatī on the elephant took flywisks in their hands and began to wave on Śiva. Here in place of Gaṅgā as described by Kālidāsa (Kumārasambhava 7. 42) Sarasvatī has been substituted.

A description of the marriage procession closely follows that of Kālidāsa including also the motifs of the city women racing to have a look at the party. Śiva reached the Vedī of the Vivāha-Yajña where Pārvatī beautifully adorned was brought by her brother Sunābha. A special motif of *Vara-Vadhū-krīḍā* is mentioned here consisting of striking each other with wreaths of pearls and throwing handfuls of red powder (*Sindūra*) on each other. These and similar ceremonies are performed in some places after the marriage on the second day, but here the reference is to the custom of some particular place where such sportive exchanges between the bride-groom and the bride preceded the real ceremony. The details of the ceremony include *Kanyā-dāna, Madhuparka, Lāja-homa, Agni-pradakshiṇā, Saubhāgya-dāna.*

A strange motif is introduced, viz. Brahmā looking at the great beauty of the World Mother loses control of himself and from his seed mingling in the sand were born the Vālakhilya sages. This brief reference obviously appears to be irrelevant, but on second thought it seems to be a definite and purposive motif intended by the Purāṇa writer as a stroke of his brush to complete the picture of Śiva's marriage with Pārvatī. The background is that Śiva enters into a regular marriage for the sake of *Maithunī-Srishṭi,* where as Brahmā emits his energy at the sight of Sarasvatī, or Sāvitrī or Śatarūpā, all archetypal of the female form created from his own body. The same female energy of the universal mother was now present before his eyes in the form of Umā whose beauty was irresistible

and agitated Brahmā's mind. The emission of Brahmā's seed and its absorption in the dust or particles of creation is symbolical of *Mānasī-Srishṭi* or creation at the level of Mind, which takes the form of the *Ūrdhva-Retas-Ṛishis* entering the creative process on the level of Matter. The sands symbolise Matter or Mother-principle.

Ch. 54 describes how Viśvakarmā built a residence for Śiva of the type of Svastika :—

ततश्चकार शर्वस्य गृहं स्वस्तिकलक्षणम् ।
योजनानि चतुःषष्टिः प्रमाणेन हिरण्मयम् ॥ (Vn. 54.2)

The place is said to be planned with seven extensive courts (*Suvistīrṇa Sapta-Kakshya*), leading from a staircase to an assembly hall embellished with figures of beryl (*Vaidūrya-krita-rūpaka*) and thereafter into the interior of the palace through an arched gateway of ivory with ledges (*Danta-torana nirvyūha*) which refers to the special chamber in which the newly wedded pair spent their time and which was adorned with pendants of pearl fertoons (*Muktā-jālāntaram*) and many other auspicious motifs (*Śubha*, (Vn. 54. 3) :—

दन्ततोरणनिर्व्यूहं मुक्ताजालान्तरं शुभम् ।
शुद्धस्फटिकसोपानं वैदूर्यकृतरूपकम् ।
सप्तकक्ष्यं सुविस्तीर्णं सर्वं समुदितं गुणैः (Vn. 54.3-4)

A new symbolic motif which occurs also in the *Matsya* is introduced here, viz. that Śiva once addressed Pārvatī as *Kālī* which enraged her. She came back to her father's house and entered upon a course of severe *Tapas* standing on one foot, seeing which a tiger offered his body to prevent her from falling. Brahmā becoming propitiated came to her to bestow a boon. She first asked that the tiger be the foremost of her *Gaṇas* as *Vyāghra-pāda* and that she herself may have a golden complexion. When the boon was granted a dark form appeared from the sheath of her body by which she assumed a golden hue and then her dark counterpart named Kauśikī was taken by Indra for giving her a residence on the *Vindhya* mountain. The obvious reference is to the goddess Vindhyavāsinī who as the presiding deity of Vindhya is conceived of as but another form of Pārvatī, the daughter of Himālaya mountain thus portraying the two as the aspects of the same female energy, and linked to a common cult of the Mother Goddess. Śiva and Pārvatī became engaged in their love sports

(*Mahā-mohanaka*) for a thousand years which disturbed the gods and they came to that spot but were prevented from entering inside by Nandī. At this Agni taking the form of a *Haṁsa* got access to the inner apartments of Śiva and disclosing his identity announced the presence of the gods at the palace gate. Śiva came out and pleased at the sight of the gods asked them to choose a boon. They humbly requested a cessation of his *Mahāmaithuna*. Śiva agreed and asked as to who was ready to bear his *Tejas*. None dared and then Agni offered to take. Thereupon Śiva emitted his golden seed which was taken in by Agni. The gods being satisfied returned to heaven.

This motif is based on the Vedic idea of the identify of Agni and Rudra :—

यो वै रुद्रः सोऽग्निः ŚB. 5. 2. 4. 13.

त्वमग्ने रुद्रः RV. II. 1. 6.

अग्निर्वै रुद्रः ŚB. 5. 3. 1. 10.

एष रुद्रः यदग्निः TB. 1. 1. 5. 8-9.

रुद्रोऽग्निः Tāṇḍya 12. 4. 24.

तान्येतान्यष्टौ (रुद्रः शर्वः, पशुपतिः, उग्रः, अशनिः भवः, महान्देवः, ईशानः) अग्निरूपाणि, कुमारो नवमः—ŚB. 6. 1. 3. 18.

The implication is that Rudra is the cosmic *Prāṇa* which descends in the individual centre as *Vaiśvānara* Agni. This doctrine of the identity of Rudra and Agni was the bed-rock of Rudra-mythology and the Yajña-cult of Agni. The same is accepted here that Agni alone was able to bear the seed of Śiva who was later on born as Kumāra or Skanda.

The story also takes a turn to explain the birth of Gaṇeśa whom Pārvatī created out of the rubbings of her toilet. The foetus consisted of earth and water only and Śiva breathed life into it. He was accepted by Pārvatī as her son and as the leader of all the *Gaṇa*-hosts and given the name of *Vināyaka*.

Ch. 55 relates that Kaśyapa from his wife Danu obtained three sons, Śumbha, Niśumbha and Namuchi. The story of Namuchi was rooted in ancient symbolism referred to in the *Ṛigveda* VIII. 14. 13 :—

अपां फेनेन नमुचेः शिर इन्द्रोदवर्तयः। विश्वा यदजयः स्पृधः।

'With waters' foam thou torest off, Indra, the head of Namuchi, subduing all contending hosts.'

Later on it was elaborated in the Brāhmaṇas, e. g. Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, 12. 7. 3. 1-4.

1. By means of the *Surā*-liquor Namuchi, the *Asura*, carried off Indra's (source of) strength, the essence of food, the *Soma*-drink. He (*Indra*) hastened up to the Aśvins and Sarasvatī, crying 'I have sworn to Namuchi, saying, "I will slay thee neither by day nor by night, neither with staff nor with bow, neither with thee palm of my hand nor with the fist, neither with the dry nor with the moist." and yet has he taken these things from me : seek ye to bring me back these things.'

2. They spake, 'Let us have a share therein, and we will bring them back to thee'.—'These things (shall be) in common to us,' he said, 'bring them back, then :'

3. The Aśvins and Sarasvatī then poured out foam of water (to serve) as a thunderbolt, saying, 'It is neither dry nor moist' ; and, when the night was clearing up, and the sun had not yet risen, Indra, thinking, 'It is neither by day nor by night', therewith struck off the head of Namuchi, the *Asura*.

4. Wherefore it has been said by the *Ṛishi* (*Ṛig-veda* VIII. 14. 13), 'With foam of water, Indra, didst thou sever the head of Namuchi, when thou wert subduing all thine enemies'. Now, Namuchi is evil ; having thus, indeed, slain that evil, his hateful enemy, Indra wrested from him his energy, or vital power. Let him who has an enemy perform the *Sautrāmaṇi* : he thereby slays that evil, his hateful enemy, and wrests from him his energy, or vital power. In his (*Namuchi's*) severed head there was the *Soma*-juice mixed with blood. They loathed it. They perceived that (means of) drinking separately (one of) the two liquids,—'King *Soma*, the drink of immortality, is pressed'[1] ;—and having thereby made that (*Soma*) palatable, they took it in (as food).

This motif of the *Soma* or Waters which was made an instrument to slay Namuchi is further elaborated by stating that the Watery Foam was the first principle created by Prajāpati which ultimately found its full culmination in producing the Plant Life (*Oshadhi-*

1. Vāj. S. XIX, 72 seq. On the myth cp. Muir, O. S. T., Vol. v, p. 94.

Vanaspati) through a series of eight other forms enumerated as clay (*Mṛid*), dry mud (*Śushkāp*), saline soil (*Ūsha*), sand (*Sikatā*), gravel (*Śarkarā*), stone (*Aśman*), ore (*Ayaḥ*), gold (*Hiraṇya*) and finally plants and trees (*Oshadhi-vanaspati*, *ŚB*. 6. I. 1. 13). Why did Prajāpati create these nine forms ? The answer is that he desired the primeval mother-principle of the universe which was Water and which was one, to become more then one and to reproduce itself. With this object in view he performed penance of mind, *Prāṇa* and body and thereby created Foam. By looking at Foam he was satisfied that that would be effective in becoming more than one and that it looked different from Water (Ś*B*. 6. 1. 1. 12–13).

This is essentially a cosmogonical symbolism. The whole world exists in the beginning as concealed within the depth of the primeval ocean called *Samudra*, *Āpaḥ Salilam* in the Vedas and *Ekārṇava* in the Purāṇas. The creative Mother Principle symbolised as *Prithivī* was also hidden in those Waters and the Creator wanted to make it manifest. The problem before Prajāpati was two-fold, first to discover the principle of motherhood symbolised as earth and secondly make motherhood which was one to generate forms or procreate manifest life in Matter. With reference to the first problem the writer of the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* says that *Prajāpati* compressed the earth from out of the Waters as the first principle and dissolved it again in the Waters so that the motherhood principle permeated the primeval ocean with the potency of creativity.

But the possibilities of creation were obstructed by the demon principle symbolised as Vṛitra, Namuchi, Vala, Śambara, all essentially having the same significance, viz. seizure, obstruction, captivity, shutting up the cows of creation in dark caverns. Vṛitra literally means one who envelopes everything and falls into state of sleep (*Vṛitro vā idaṁ sarvaṁ vṛitvā śiśye, yadidamantareṇa dyāvā-pṛithivī*, ŚB. 1. 1. 3. 4.) This is also the meaning of Namuchi, i. e. the *Asura* who obstructs the free flow of the Waters of creation. Both of these *Asuras* are the genius of Darkness and Evil (*Pāpmā vai Vṛitraḥ*, *ŚB*. 11. 1. 5. 7 ; *Pāpmā vai Namuchiḥ*, *ŚB*. 12. 7. 3. 4). This obstructive principle is opposed to motherhood or creating of life-forms. He takes shelter in the Waters of the ocean and lies there concealed, with an assurance given by Indra, the Sun god as the genius of creation, that he would not be slain except by the Watery Foam. The meaning is

clear. Sūrya or Indra must assert itself and creation must take place. This is done by overcoming Namuchi through foam which Indra invests with the potency of his *Vajra*. Each weapon which overcomes the *Asura* is *Vajra*. *Vajra* is the symbol of the irresistible power of the *Deva* ; that power enters the waters and reappears as Foam. This *Vajra* is the father-principle symbolised by Indra and Sūrya and is the male seed, (*Vīryaṁ vai Vajraḥ* ŚB. 7. 3. 1. 19; 1. 3. 5. 7) that fecundates the waters of motherhood. The result is the creation of the fertilized ovum of which the dominant symbol is Foam (*Apāṃ Phenaḥ*). The result of the union of the sperm with the ovum or of the two parental principles is the releasing of a chain-action by which the bodily forms are created. The foetus in the mother's womb undergoes numerous embryonic changes governed by certain basic laws of reproduction and formation of the different elements of the body like the glands, tissues, nerves, bones, enzymes, membranes, (*Ulba vā ūshāḥ*, *ŚB*, 7.3.1.11). The Brāhmaṇa writer does not specify these anatomical details but takes recourse to the symbolism of the eight names and forms of the one Life-principle called Agni. The eight names of Agni are enumerated in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* as *Rudra, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Aśani, Bhava, Mahān deva, Īśāna* (ŚB. 6.1.3.18) which combine and become Babe as the ninth creation (*Kumāro navamaḥ*). Similarly here the eight forms of Agni are given as clay, mud etc., and the ninth becomes the *Oshadhi* or plants and trees which are the symbols of Life (Prāṇa) in manifest form. Men, animals and plants are equally the symbols of Prāṇa as becoming visible in Matter. Each one of them is created by the seed of the father deposited in the female and this starts the chain of life in the form of Foam. Speaking mystically, the *Soma* in the mother becomes fermented as *Surā* with Foam and the same becomes gradually transformed and purified into the Life sap which creates the Babe. The story of Namuchi rooted in Vedic symbolism and handled by the *Purāṇa* writer a little more elaborately adding some new motifs is essentially a symbolical statement of the entire cosmic process by which the universal *Prāṇa* or male energy of the Creator takes visible form as life generated in the foetus. Here all the elements of mythological statement are invoked, viz. the *Deva* as the principle of light and manifestatfon, the *Asura* Namuchi as the genius of ooncealment and obstruction, *Vajra* or thunderbolt as the instrument of irresistible divine potency for fashioning new forms, Waters as the mother-principle or *Soma* and Foam as the symbol of

fertilized mother-principle reproducing Agni as the Kumāra by a mysterious processing.

The story of Namuchi is given a place in this context because Indra stained with the sin of *Brahma-hatyā* for his slaying Namuchi, became purified after a bath in the Sthāṇeśvara Tīrtha. The next part of the story is with the episode of Śumbha and Niśumbha who were full of wrath on hearing the death of their brother Namuchi. The names of Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa also come as those of their ministers and similarly of Raktabīja, all of whom took part in the fight against the Devī. Here it is stated that the original battle had taken place between Devī and Mahishāsura in which Mahisha was slain and this was the second encounter between Devī on the one hand and Chaṇḍa, Muṇḍa and Raktabīja on the other. It is also stated that after the death of Mahisha, Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa had hidden themselves in the waters of the Narmadā from which they reappeared later for taking part in a renewed struggle against the Devī. It appears that the whole story is influenced by the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa version of the *Devī-Māhātmya* and its geographical background.

Here the main leaders of the battle are Śumbha and Niśumbha. They first depute their messenger Sugrīva with overtures of marriage and when the same is turned down, the two *Asura*-kings ordered Dhūmra-Lochana, their commander, to lead their forces against the Goddess. In this account Dhūmra-Lochana was reduced to ashes by the goddess and she is named *Vibhāvarī* with reference to her Dark aspect as Kauśikī mentioned earlier. Pārvatī has the golden or resplendent form and Kauśikī the dark form of the single Goddess Chaṇḍikā. It is mentioned here that the Goddess plucked out one of her locks from which she created a new form of her named Chaṇḍamārī and asked her to kill the demons Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa. We have discussed at length in our commentary on the Devī-Māhātmya the symbolism of the Asuras Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa as typifying the two aspects of the *Āsuric* energy of *Prāṇa-śakti* which was overcome by the Goddess Chaṇḍamārī, i. e. an aspect of Chāmuṇḍā :—

शेखरं चण्डमुण्डाभ्यां यस्माद्धारयसे शुभम् ।
तस्माल्लोके तवख्यातिश्चामुण्डेति भविष्यति ॥

(Vn. 55. 83)

14

The *Devī-Māhātmya* conceives the struggle between the Goddess and the *Asuras* as Three Actions described in the *Pūrva-charita, Madhyama-charita* and *Uttara-charita.* The *Pūrva-charita* corresponds to the plane of *Sattva* or *Manas* (Mind), the *Madhyama-charita* to the plane of *Rajas* or *Prāṇa,* and the *Uttara-charita* to the plane of *Tamas* or *Bhūtas.* The *Āsuric* darkness exists in the Psychic Man, the Vital Man and the Physical Man. The conflict with Madhu-Kaiṭabha refers to the first, that with Mahisha to the second, and that with Śumbha-Niśumbha etc. to the third. But the last or the physical body is the real arena of the battle, and victory for the divine powers must be decided in actual life on the plane of matter in which both the *Manas* and *Prāṇa* take part with the physical sense-organs of *Jñana* and *Karma,* i.e. Knowledge and Action. It means that life in the physical body is the result of the integration of all the three constituents of human personality. Mere thought is not enough. In order to be effective, an idea must become concrete on the plane of matter through action. This is why in the final victory the *Devī* has to face three combatants, each of whom must be purged of his Āsuric nature and be sublimed to the divine plane.

The story in the *Uttara-charita* includes an account of a threefold battle between Durgā and (1) Śumbha-Niśumbha, (2) Chaṇḍa-Muṇḍa and (3) Raktabīja. The battle with Śumbha and Niśumbha represents the psychological complex, that with Chaṇḍa-Muṇḍa the doubts or fluctuations in deciding about actions. On both these planes a person is seized with *Moha* or mental darkness and vital stupor.

It is for this reason that we have the hostile forces conceived in two pairs, e. g. *Saṁkalpa-Vikalpa* in the mind, *Karma-Akarma* in the sphere of action. When a person begins to think he is often assailed with a negative thought which cancels his positive decisions. This is the fight with Śumbha-Niśumbha. Unless the hostile mind is brought under control the divine mind with its clear decision and directive will cannot prevail. Even when the mind is clear and the right course of action has been determined, the prānic energy thwarts the will and all the divine powers of the mind become befogged and smoky. The clear light of wisdom gets bedimmed. Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa represent the Āsuric nature of *Prāṇa.* Muṇḍa literally is the Head or the Idea and Chaṇḍa is the headless torso wherein most of the organs of action i. e. *Karmendriyas* are located which are responsible for the fierceness or impetuosity of action or *Karma.*

Ch. 56 coutinues the account of the Āsuric battle with Raktabīja as the first combatant. From every drop of his blood falling on the ground new forms appeared but ultimately the goddess made short work of all of them. Raktabīja throws the most violent challenge to the power of the goddess. The name Raktabīja is significant as referring to the physical body, i. e, the person whose seed or birth is from the blood. Each individual is in a true sense Raktabīja and each drop of this blood is capable of creating similar bodies. This is the moral of the story that the blood of Raktabīja does not end by killing one individual, but his race is indefinitely multiplied as each drop of that blood can be converted into his brood. The Goddess, therefore, is required to lick with her tongue the whole of this bloody race of the hostile *Asuras*. Figuratively, the blood flowing from the team of Raktabīja is collected by the Goddess in a bowl of which the contents are drunk by Her. If one drop of that blood falls on the ground, another Asura is produced. The Earth is the symbol of motherhood (*Pṛithivī Mātā*) and the object of the battle is to annihilate the brood of the *Asura* Raktabīja from the face of the earth.

Symbolism of Kālikā and Kauśikī

Two points are specially noteworthy in this portion of the plot. The first is that the Great Goddess incarnating as Pārvatī, Daughter of the Mountain, takes a dip in the river Gaṅgā. As a result the collective power of the several sheaths of her body, *Pañcha-Kośas*, is changed into her double as Kauśikī, and She herself becomes Kālikā, the Dark One. The meaning of the several symbols, viz. the Mountain, Pārvatī, Gaṅgā, Kauśikī and Kālikā should be clearly understood. The Mountain is the body itself as a *Kūṭa* or pile of the gross material elements. His daughter Pārvatī is identical with what in the *Tantras* is known as *Kuṇḍalinī*, that is, the vital energy of the psycho-physical man. Pārvatī has the composite form of Śiva, that is, the *Ardha-nārīśvara* form in which the male half is the symbol of *Agni* and the female half that of *Soma*. Gaṅgā represents the river of *Soma* taking her birth from the Ocean of Soma in the region of *Parameshṭhī*. By a dip in the Gaṅgā, the Great Goddess bifurcates Her person into *Soma* as Kauśikī and into *Agni* as Kālikā. Kauśikī is Her auspicious or beautiful form (*Saumya*) and Kālī or Kālikā is her terrific and destructive form (*Āgneyī ghorā tanū*). The colour of

Agni becomes radiant or white when it is mingled with *Soma*, otherwise *Agni* is black, e.g. so long as there is oil in the wick it emits flame, but when there is no oil, there is no flame and the burning portion of the wick becomes black. Similarly in the bodies of plants and animals, life continues to exist so long as food and water (i.e. *Soma*) are supplied to the digestive fire or physical hunger. When the *Asuras* saw the beautiful form of Kauśikī, they ran to devour her. But Goddess Kālī with all Her innate ferocity as the Black Destructive Mother who withdraws the whole creation into Her wide gaping mouth, began to devour the *Asuras*. In this form she is Chāmuṇḍā, the All-consuming Fiery Energy who tramples on the corpse (the symbol of matter without prāṇa), whose breasts are dried without motherly compassion, whose body is a skeleton with creeping deadly reptiles. This is eventually the fate of every *Asura*, i. e. the person who believes in the principle of darkness and meets his inevitable destiny of destruction and death. Even the elements are arrayed against him and the fury of nature and man swallows him. The *Asura* goes down and the Devī triumphs.

In this chapter, as that in the *Devī-Māhātmya*, is given a description of the Seven Mother Goddesses, Brāhmaṇī, Māheśvarī, Vaishṇavī, Indrāṇī, Kaumārī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṁhī and Chāmuṇḍā together with their weapons and vehicles. In the *Śrī-Chakra*, these mother goddesses find a definite place and grades in the worship, the middle-most point leading to from Bindu the outer square (*Chaturasra*). It appears that the legend of Mahisha, Śumbha-Niśumbha, Chaṇḍa-Muṇḍa, Raktabīja etc. vanquished or slain by the Great Goddess, had its basis in the ancient cult worship of Śrī or Kātyāyanī.

This is indicated by the appearance of the Seven Mother Goddesses (*Sapta-Mātṛikās*) and their taking a leading part with the Devī in the fray against the *Asuras*. They also formed part of the *Śrī-Chakra* conception in *Tantras*.

Ch. 57 relates the legend of Kārttikeya. It is stated that god Agni had taken within himself the seed of Śiva but he could not bear it so he persuaded Kuṭilā, the eldest sister of Umā Kālī who had become transformed into a river to receive the seed which she accepted and the seed mingled in her water. She became the river Mahā Āpagā in Kurukshetra. Owing to the intense heat of Śiva's semen Agni roamed for 5000 years and all his body and limbs became golden. He was then known as *Hiraṇya-Retas*.

Śiva's seed in the womb of Kuṭilā grew in a foetus and at the instance of Brahmā she became delivered of the child in a place known as *Śaravaṇa,* the Forest of Reeds. There the *Six-Kṛittikā* Mothers saw the Babe and took it up for suckling. The Babe thus came to be called *Kārttikeya.* The child became six-headed to drink the breasts of his six mothers and therefore he became known as *Shaṇmukha.*

During the early Kushāṇa period Kārttikeya was known by four other names, viz., Skanda, Viśākha, Mahāsena and Kumāra which are found on a gold coin of Huvishka and also in the *Revatī-Kalpa* of the *Kaśyapa Saṁhitā.* The Vāmana-Purāṇa invents a small sketch for these names stating that Śiva-Pārvatī, Kuṭilā and Agni together went to see the child and he assumed four forms to please each one of them. He went to Śiva as Kumāra, to Pārvatī as Viśakha, to Kuṭilā as Sākha and to Agni as Naigameya (Vn. 57.40). The names Naigameya and Śākha also occur for Skanda in the literature of this period. Naigameya was derived from *Naigama* i. e. the god worshipped by the merchant class. Amongst the *Jainas* he was transformed as *Naigameśa,* being a goat-headed deity who presided over child-birth and fertility and was depicted in both male and female forms as shown by Kushāṇa sculptures in Mathurā. Śākha literally means the reed and its symbolism was connected with the golden reed *Hiraṇya Vetasa* of Vedic literature where the reed is the human body itself or more properly the spinal column in which *Sushumnā* or the spinal cord is located. She is the mother of six-headed Kārttikeya or son of Rudra, the six *Chakras* serving as the six mouths by which the babe was suckled. Each *Chakra* also typifies a mother where Śakti is generated and processed in an ascending scale of *Sādhanā.*

The other legend of Kārttikeya with several obscure motifs like the semen of Rudra being transfered to Agni and then thrown into the river and finally in a grove of reeds where the Babe was born who was suckled by the six mothers are consistent in the context of Yogic idealogy and *Sādhanā.* Śiva is the transcendant Divine Being and Pārvatī is his female energy, the Great Mother of the universe. Their energy descends to the level of Matter which is the meaning of the semen being ejected and taken by Agni. According to well known Vedic doctrine Rudra as Agni is also the name of *Sushumnā,* and the river in which the semen was cast by Agni represents the left side cord known as Gaṅgā. From there it was thrown in a grove

of reeds which is the body itself or more properly the *Sahasrāra*, the Centre of Thousand Spokes in which each spoke is compared either with a Reed or to a Petal of the Infinite Mind that inheres in the highest centre.

KUMĀRA-VIDYĀ

The legend of Kumāra as amplified in the *Purāṇas* is purposive in order to explain the ancient *Kumāra-vidyā* or the metaphysical doctrine of Agni as the miraculous Babe (*Chitra-Śiśu*, RV. X. 1.2). This Babe is the same as *Kumāra Agni* which is but another name of Rudra, as often identified in the *Brāhmaṇas* (*Yo vai Rudraḥ so vai Agniḥ*, ŚB 5. 2. 4. 13; *Esha Rudro Agniḥ*, TB. 1. 1. 5. 8-8). The most mysterious power produced in matter is life or consciousness and and that is called *Prāṇāgni* or Rudra or *Madhya-Prāṇa* or Indra. From the point of view of Vedic symbolism they are of the same nature.

Ashṭamūrti Rudra—Rudra in Purāṇic terminology is called *Ashṭamūrti*, i.e. he has eight forms. Kālidāsa has enumerated them as follows:—

1. *Prithivī* (*Sarvabīja-Prakriti*)
2. *Jala* (*Yā Srishṭiḥ Śrashṭurādyā*)
3. *Agni* (*Vahati vidhihutaṁ yā haviḥ*)
4. *Vāyu* (*Yayā praṇaḥ prāṇavantaḥ*)
5. *Ākāśa* (*Sruti-vishayaguṇā yā sthitâ vyāpya viśvam*)
6. *Sūrya*
7. *Chandra* (*Ye dve kālaṁ vidhattaḥ*)
8. *Manas* (*Yā cha hotrī*; same as *Yajamāna, Dīkshita, Brāhmaṇa*) (Abhijñāna Śākuntala, 1. 1.)

These eight forms of Śiva are material (*Prākrita*) and are essential for the manifestation of life. They are the lower *Prakriti* (*Aparā Prakriti*), also called *Kshara-Purusha* (*Ksharaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtâṇi*).

In Vedic terminology these were known as the *Ashṭa Vasus*. It is explained that they are called *Vasus* because they make all creatures manifest in concrete form or as embodied :—

Eate hīdaṁ sarvaṁ vāsayante te yadidaṁ sarvaṁ vāsayante tasmādvasavaḥ
(ŚB. 11. 6. 3. 6).

How many are the *Vasus? Katame Vasava iti. Agniścha Pṛithivī cha Vāyuśchāntarikshaṁ chādityāścha Chandramāścha Nakshatrāṇi chaite vasavaḥ* (ŚB. 11. 6. 3. 6).

Here *Pṛithivī, Agni, Vāyu* and *Dyauḥ* (Ākāśa), *Sūrya* and *Chandra* are clearly named. But *Antariksha* and *Nakshatra* are obscure names which on the surface do not seem to tally with the list of Kālidāsa. As a matter of fact *Antariksha* stands for *Jala,* since the waters are stored up in the airy mid-region (*Antarikshaṁ va āpaṁ sadhastham,* ŚB. 7.5.2.57). Similarly *Nakshatra* is that which is not *Kshatra,* an etymology approved by Pāṇini (*Ashṭaṁ,* 6. 3. 75), deriving the word not from the root *Naksha* but with the negative particle added before *Kshatra. Kshatra* is temporal power (Regium), the opposite of which is *Brahma* (Sacredotium) referring to spiritual authority. Therefore *Nakshatrāṇi* of the above list of the eight *Vasus* stands for the principle of *Brahma* or *Brāhmaṇa,* as is also clearly stated in another Vedic text :—

Brāhmaṇo vai Ashṭāviṃśo Nakshatrāṇām (TB. 1.5.3.4.)

Of the above eight forms of Śiva or the eight Vasus, there are three clear groups or categories representing three elements of manifestation. They are as follows :—

I. *Bhūta-mātrā* = *Pṛithivī, Jala, Teja, Vāyu, Akāśa* or the five gross elements.

II. *Prāṇa-mātrā* = *Sūrya* and *Chandra,* symbolising *Prāṇāpāna* the hot and cold aspects of the single Vital Power.

III. *Prajñā-mātrā* = *Manas* or Mind, which is the *Yajamāna* of the bodily *Yajña* and is also mentioned as *Dikshita Brāhmaṇa* in the *Purāṇas.* :— (*Atmā tasyāshṭamī mūrtir-yajamānāhvayā parā, Liṅga,* 2. 12. 43-44).

The eight forms of Śiva bear also other names. In the Brāhmaṇas it is said that the central *Prāṇa* (*Madhya Prāṇa*) came to reside within this body. He cried for food and therefore was called Rudra (*Yadarodīt-tasmād-rudraḥ,* ŚB. 6. 1. 3. 10). This *Madhya-Prāṇa* is symbolised as the Babe or *Kumāra* which is the same as the conscious life-principle manifested in matter (*Ayam vāva śiśuryo ayaṁ madhyamaḥ*

prāṇaḥ, *Bṛiḥ. Up*. 2. 2. 1). The meaning of crying or weeping should be clearly understood. It is the Vedic principle of hunger (*Aśanāyā*) that is called *Rodana* (ŚB. 6. 1. 3. 10). Agni as life within the body becomes afflicted with hunger or desire for food, i. e. Agni wants *Soma* and that is his crying or weeping. Seeing that the newly born Babe was crying, the gods said, "Let us give food and pacify" (*Annam asmai sambharāma ṭenainaṁ śamayameti*, ŚB. 9. 1. 1. 2).

The Brāhmaṇa writer also propounds the theory of the eight names of Śiva as follows :—

Tānyetāni Rudraḥ, Śivaḥ, Paśupatiḥ, Ugraḥ, Aśaniḥ Bhavaḥ, Mahādeva, Īśānaḥ Ashṭāvagni-rūpāṇi Kumāro navamaḥ, ŚB. 6, 1. 3.18. These eight names correspond to the *Ashṭamūrtis* of Śiva, singly none of them is able to create life but when they unite then they incarnate as *Kumāra* which is said here to be the ninth creation of Rudra. The meaning is quite clear. It is that the lower *Prakṛiti* which is eight-fold and symbolised as the *Ashṭamūrti* aspect of Śiva is inadequate for the manifestation of life but when consciousness or *Chetanā* or *Jīva* or *Parā Prakṛiti* enters the physical sheath of the body, then is the birth of *Kumāra*. In the words of the Gītā, the eight elements of *Prakṛiti* are called *Aparā-Prakṛiti* and *Jīva* as *Parā* :—

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायु खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥
अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् । (Gītā, 7. 4-5).

The *Kumāra* is the principle of Life, Prāṇāgni, as manifested in Matter. He is the son of Śiva and Pārvatī where Śiva is the principle of *Purusha* and Pārvatī that of *Prakṛiti* or Matter. In order that *Kumārāgni* which was invisible before may descend to the level of Matter and become manifest, it is essential that both Śiva and Pārvatī should be united and from their marital union a new force or power is produced, i. e. Skanda or Kumāra or the Miraculous Boy (*Adbhutasyadbhtaṁ putram*, Āraṇyaka parva, 213. 2). Agni as *Prāṇa* is the most mysterious principle of energy and truly called *Adbhuta* or *Chitra* ; in its manifest form also it remains *Adbhuta* and its mystery is unknown.

Kumāra-vidyā in *Yoga* and *Tantra*—

Besides the above enunciation of *Kumāra-vidyā* which was rooted in Vedic symbolism, the Purāṇas also take it further

as inspired by *Yoga* and *Tantra* doctrine. Their main interest is the interpretatation of *Kumāra* within the body itself because it is the real physical, vital and psychical substratum that is the body in which manifest life is functioning. In this approach we find several new symbolical statements like the six-faced god Kārtikeya (*Shaḍānana*) born of six mothers (*Shaḍ-māturaḥ*), son of Pārvatī, son of Fire, whose birth was in the grove of reeds (*Saravaṇa-bhava*), husband of *Deva-senā* with his ensign the *Kukkuṭa* of *Mayūra*, anointed by Brahmā and Śiva as the generalissimo of the divine army, wielder of *Śakti* with names like *Guha*, *Mahāsena*, *Vishākha*, *Vīraka*, and lastly the meaning of his victory over Tārakā-sura. Each one of these symbols has a meaning and *Purāṇic* imagery as supplemented by the *Yoga* and *Tantra Āgamas*. For this purpose a minute study was made of the anatomical structure of the central nervous system, i.e. of the higher brain (cerebrum), lower brain (cerebellum), of the magnum foramin or the opening through which the lower-most extension of the nervous system enters the brain, (*Meru Parvata* or *Himālaya*), spinal cord (*Sushumnā*) central nervous energy (*Kuṇḍalinī*) the six plexus or nervous cuetres (*Shaṭchakra*), etc. and applied to *Yogic-Sādhanā*. What actually was observed is the existence of the spinal column having 33 vertedrae (*Parvan*) which together make up the *Merudaṇḍa*. This is the *Parvata* or Mountain within the Hody and the power that is generated in the system is naturally given the name of *Parvatarāja-Putrī* or Pārvatī. This *Pārvatī* has two aspects, the first when it is lying dormant in the lowest *Chakra* and is considered to be *Kumārī* (the maiden). She is awakened and entering the magnetic sphere of consciousness becomes eager to meet Śiva who is the centre of cosmic consciousness within the body located in the higher mind called the *Sahasradala-Kamala* or *Ājñā-chakra*. This union of Pārvatī and Śiva cannot take place so long as Pārvatī is soiled in Matter and she is proud of her physical charm. Physical beauty is merely the attraction of matter and rejected by Śiva; that is the idea behind *Kāma* or the God of Love being consumed to ashes by the third eye of Śiva which is the eye of wisdom or self-knowledge that is opened as the fruit of *Samādhi*. Śiva in *Samādhi* represents the principle of illumination that has conquered death and rises above the temptation of matter. What happens in *Yoga* is a progressive *Sādhanā*, of the *Kuṇḍalinī* power, that is control over the energy of

15

each *Chakra* and thus rising higher in scale she becomes the mistress of all the five *Chakras* which control the five material elements of the earth, water, fire, air and sky. A *Yogī* who has ascended in his *Sādhanā* beyond these five *Chakras* rises above all temptation of matter. In simple words, the power of his mind becomes so organised and perfect that lure of physical sense pleasure do not at all disturb him. He becomes conscious of reality and the five senses fail to move him (cf. Kālidāsa, Raghu. 4. 7.). Rising above the sheaths of matter or the temptation of the senses or conquering the five *Chakras* (Coccygeal, Secral, Lumber, Dorsal and Cervical region), the *Yogī* enters the sixth *Ājñā-chakra*, so called sub-conscious and unconscious because all forces are brought under the conscious control. This is the true meeting of Śiva and Pārvatī expressed as Marriage, for there is nothing higher and more mystical than the principle of marriage which brings about the most profound condition of the union of the two principles of *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti* in the form of *Ardhanārīśvara*.

Sublimation of Mind

Tapas or the sublimation of lower nature as manifested through the body Prāṇa and Manas is the only way of attaining to the level of *Ājñā-chakra*. This is what Pārvatī does. Instead of *Rūpa* which belongs to the body or matter she ascends to the height of Tapas which belongs to the level of Manas or consciousness, as the poet puts it :—

तथा समक्षं दहता मनोभवं पिनाकिना भग्नमनोरथा सती ।
निनिन्द रूपं हृदयेन पार्वती प्रियेषु सौभाग्यफला हि चारुता ॥
इयेष सा कर्तुमबन्ध्यरूपतां समाधिमास्थाय तपोभिरात्मनः ।
अवाप्यते वा कथमन्यथा द्वयं तथाविधं प्रेम पतिश्च तादृशः ॥

(Kumārasambhava, 5. 1-2.)

The six Chakras

The six Chakras with their physico-chemical and psychical powers are the six mothers of *Kumāra*. The power which comes to the *Yogī* after his victory of the energy in the six *Chakras* is a new incarnation known as *Kumāra*. It is the same bodily energy but in a new birth destined to obtain with the help of the Śeva victory over the Āsuric forces. He is therefore called the son of the six mothers. The asterism of *Krittikā* is made a convenient symbol of the six

mothers because in the Pleides there are six stars. For the same reason the new god is calleds ix-faced (*Shaḍānana*). His birth takes place in the long cavity (*Guha*) of the spinal column, i. e. in the *Sushumnā* which is the spinal canal and therefore he is named *Guha*.

The physical structure of the spinal column consists of 33 vertebrae making up the five *Chakras* as explained above. Each vertebra is superimposed on the other forming one long reed which is known as the Golden Reed (*Hiaraṇmaya-Vetasa*) or the garland of golden lotuses (*Pushkara-sraj*). The structure of each vertebra is such that in the centre is a hole whereas on the two sides are two projections which also have a small perforation through which the right and left nervous cords pass. In the central canal called *Sushumnā* there is filled the secretion called cerebro-spinal fluid which saturates the central nervous system and also the brain and is filled not only in the spinal canal below but also in the four ventricles of the brain. It is the most refined and valuable secretion in the human-body and its physiological functions are also most subtle and mysterious. It is the *Soma* or the elixir of immortality which is also the *Retas* or the *humidus radical* of the whole organism. In *Yoga*, utmost emphasis is laid on the purification and conservation or the vital energy, i.e. the *Soma* or *Retas*. As a matter or fact this seed is not only the germ of physical and physiological functioning but also the highest mental functioning both of the lower and higher minds or of the conscious, subconscious and supraconscious minds. This is the real *Soma* which feeds the brain cells and its grey matter. It is said to be the heavenly stream of Gaṅgā which flows through the three regions and makes a cross circulation. The spinal column is the *Prithivī-Loka*, the cerebrum is the *Dyuloka*, the intermediate region *Anatarikasha* is the cerebellum or lower brain which lies between the two and is a link for all the nervous intimations passing up and down. The spinal canal enters the lower brain through an orifice which is called Magnum Foramin and may be identified as the *Krauñcha-Dvāra* or *Krauñcha-Randhra*, the curved hole which was conquered by *Kumāra*, whereby he was known *Krauñcha-dāraṇa*. The spinal cord first rises above and then has to take a little twisted turn in order to enter the magnum foramin which is placed at the bottom of the bone in the head and this justifies the name *Krauñcha* (from *Kruchi kauṭilya*).

The three *Nāḍīs*—The spinal cord which is the *Sushumnā* is given the name of *Agni*. The left cord which passes through the hole on the left side of the vertebrae is called *Idā* or Gaṅgā. The right cord passing through the right side projections of the vertebrae is known as *Pingalā* or Yamunā. In the central spinal canal or tube there is no nerve as such and this is called the hidden Sarasvatī. These three cords start from the lower most *Mūlādhāra Chakra* (*Yukta—Triveṇī*) and having entered the brain they part company and spread in various directions (*Mukta-Triveṇī*). They were all Yogic symbols to describe the physiological basis of the bodily energy. But their real meaning belongs to the sphere of subtle Prāṇic and psychic *Sādhanā*.

Meaning of Skanda

So for as the symbol of *Skanda* is concerned, he represents the integrated power of all the six *Chakras* or six *Kṛittikā* Mothers and therefore called Kārtikeya, each *Chakra* being a Kṛittikā mother. The word *Kṛittikā* also refers to the principle of *Kṛitti*, i. e. the skin or hide or the enveloping element of each *Chakra* which separates the one from the other. All the six mothers feed and suckle the Babe with the milk from their breasts. So the central narvous system or the spinal column is conceived as a single branch (*Śākhā*) but with six joints and therefore the power that is produced there is called Viśāka (M. 159. 2-3.). On the basis of the symbolism of the three Nāḍis as Moon, Sun and Fire, Skanda is described as the son of fire (*Agni*) (cf. Kālidāsa *Atyādityaṁ hutvahamukhe saṁbhritaṁ taddhi tejaḥ*, Meghadūta), viz. *Sushumnā*. It is for this reason that *Agni* is brought into the picture as the mother of Skanda. The seed of Śiva is first deposited in the womb of Pārvatī or *Kuṇḍalinī* power and then shared by *Agni* (*Sushumnā*) and then by Gaṅgā or the river of *Soma* which refers to the cerebro-spinal secretion of fluid in the spinal tube. The seed is finally deposited in the forest of reeds (*Śaravaṇa*). The *Śara* or reed is the symbol of the principle of *Prāṇa* encased within the sheath of the body. It is like the *Ishīka* in the *Muñja* as described in the *Upanishads*. According to the *Tantra Ishīkā* is the same as immortality or as life, *Amṛitaṃ vai Ishīkā, Ayurvai Ishīko*, (TB. 3.8. 4.3). In the Śatapatha each *Śara* is the symbol of a portion or unit brought into existence by the thunder-bolt of Indra (*Indro yatra vajraṁ...prāharat-tachchhakalo'śīryat sa patitvā śaro' bhavat tasmachchharo nāma yadaśīryat*, ŚB. 1.2.4.1.). Each body is a *Śara* or splinter from

the great mass of Eternal Life principle struck by the *Vajra* of Indra. In this physical sheath which itself is a forest of innumerable earthly and heavenly powers, a veritable *Śaravaṇa* is produced, *Kumāra* or the Miraculous Babe who represents the power of Indra's *Vajra* or Śiva's trident, both of which become the *Śakti* in his hand which give him the epithet *Śakti-dhara.* In reality, Kumāra is the manifestation of Śakti or Pārvatī as quickened by Śiva or Rudra.

Meaning of Kuṭilā and Krauñcha

The story writer then invents a flimsy link of *Kumāracharita* with the theme of the Vāmana Purāṇa, viz. that *Kumāra* became accursed in the sin of killing maternal cousin and so he was advised by Vishṇu to take a holy bath in the river Oghavatī in Pṛithūdaka in order to purify himself.

The story is given a strange turn here that *Mahisha* entered the cavern of the *Krauñcha* mountain. The latter being the maternal uncle's son of Skanda. Kārtikeya hesitated to pierce it but being edged on by Śiva he pierced with his *Śakti* both the *Asura* and the mountain which concealed him. The name *Krauñcha* and *Kuṭilā* are both significant and have been deliberately coined with a symbolical import. In the *Tāntric* terminology *Krauñcha* is the name of *Magnum Foramin* or the big hole in the bottom of the skull through which these spinal cords enter the region of the head or the lower brain. Skanda is called *Krauñcha—dāraṇa* because from the point of view of *Sadhana,* his *Sâkti* obtains control over the region or *Krauñcha* or the portion beyond the survical region of the spinal column. It is a fact which had been carefully observed in the practical anatomy of *Yoga* that the *Sushumnā* or spinal cord rises higher than the level of the magnum foramin and then to enter it has to take a twisted bend because of which the name *Kutila* has been given to her.

Ch. 58 describes the preparation of Skanda for war against the *Asuras,* viz. Mahisha and Tāraka who were lietuenant of Aṅdhaka. All the *Devas* load their blessings and the potency of their weapons on Skanda. A detailed inscription of the battle between the divine forces and the numerous *Asura* chiefs is given leading to the death of Tāraka. Mahisha is said to have been the brother of Tāraka. After his brother's death Mahisha took flight and sought shelter in the Himālayas, in the *Krauñcha* hill.

Ch. 59 takes up another legend, viz. that of king Ṛitadhvaja of the Solar dynasty who got the nick name of Kuvalayāshva from the colour of his mighty horse who according to the legend here was sent for him from heaven. There was a certain sage named Gālava performing penances in his hermitage. He was constantly disturbed by an *Asura* named Pātālaketu. The *Muni* did not avenge himself on the *Asura* for fear of losing his merit but stared at the Sun by whom a horse was sent down on earth. This was given to Ṛitadhvaja for protecting the sage. In the mean time the *Asura* took away forcibly Madālasā, the beautiful daughter of *Gandharva* Viśvāvasu. Ṛitadhvaja took upon himself to recover the maiden from *Pātāla*. The prince killed the *Asura* and fell in love with Madālasā and married her.

This story also occurs in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (see my book 'Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa' Eka Sānskṛitika Adhyayana, pp. 91-95) where the portion given in the Vāmana is in substantial agreement but the story is extended much further. We find the legend of Kuvalayāśva again in the Mārkaṇḍeya Samasyā Parva of the Āraṇyaka Parva, but there the prince makes use of his horse for slaying the demon Dhundhu who represented the descriptive agency of the Rājasthāna desert. (See my Book 'Bhārat Sāvitrī' Vol. 1, pp. 272 ff.) It is evident that this story has a very lean connection with the principal theme of the Vāmana Purāṇa which disposes it of in a rather abrupt form. The remainder of Ch. 59 takes up the story of Andhakāsura falling in love with Pārvatī who in order to vanquish the Āsuric forces created a hundred goddesses out of her own body and struck the king of the *Asuras* with her *Śakti.* He fell down senseless and on regaining consciousness retired to *Pātāla.*

Ch. 60 states that Pārvatī was alone in Kailāsa because Śiva had gone to perform *Tapas* with a view to replenish himself with magical power which he had lost. It was for this reason that Pārvatī had to fight against Andhakāsura.

In the description of Śiva's penances a new motif is introduced in that Śiva had kept in his mouth a Vīta which seems to be the same as *Siddha Parāda guṭikā,* which in *Tāntric Śādhanā* became the hall-mark of a *Yogī.* On the expiry of his *Tapas* he took out the *Guṭikā* from his matted locks and struck with it the *Kapāla* or the head of Brahmā which he held in left hand. The *Siddha-Guṭikā* fell on the rocky

ground making it level and created a *Tīrtha* named Kedāreśvara. Śiva then pronounced his boons on the new *Tīrtha* and himself retired for a dip in the Kālindī river but before reaching it immersed himself in the Sarasvatī and remained in water for a year which caused great disturbance in the order of the three worlds. The gods with Brahmā at their head approached Murāri that is Vishṇu. Here an ancillary story of the demon Mura is taken up. Mura was the son of Danu from Kaśyapa. By his penances he obtained a boon from Brahmā to the effect that anyone touched by his hand on the head would be reduced to ashes. Mura then invaded *Svarga* and dislodged Indra, seating himself on the throne of heaven. In the mean time Indra had settled down on the banks of the Yamunā. Once the *Asura* came to Ayodhyā and challenged Raghu who was then in the midst of a sacrifice. Vaśishṭha chided him for trying his strength aginst men and suggested that he should go and bring Yama in his power. The *Asura* thereupon went to try his strength against Yama. Yama seemingly conveyed his submission ; thereupon the *Asura* asked the name of any other unconquered god whom he should fight. Yama suggested the name of Vishṇu, the deity in *Śveta-dvīpa* and the demon thereupon reached the shore of *Kshīroda* ocean. There he found Vishṇu reclining on the bed of Sesha in a four-fold form (*Chatur-mūrti*).

Here two short insets are given about the teachers of the Yoga and Sāṅkhya doctrines, the former being initiated by Sanatkumāra, Sanātana, Sanaka and Sanandana and the latter by a succession of great *Āchāryas*, by Kapila, Āsuri and Pañchaśikha.

It this part of the Purāṇa the interconnection of the story and of the accounts related cannot be said to be very happily conceived. However in Ch. 61 Brahmā in reply to a question of Sanatkumāra gives an entirely new and refreshing exposition of the 21 hells (*Narakas*) each of which is identified with one or the other of the moral lapses like calumny, unbelief, want of constancy etc., felling of timber trees, marriage within improper limit, deserting one's *dharma*, eating of dainties without sharing them with others, depriving anyone of the fruit of his *Deva-yatrā*, seizing some one's vehicle, rising in revolt against a king or pilfering government money, extreme greediness, squandering wealth properly earned etc. As is evident these are common-sense virtues of character and any lapse or transgression

thereof involves a person in hellish agony as anger, violence, slothfullness, untruth, jealousy, arrogance etc. It may be noted that in the Gupta period a list of sterling virtues of character (*Guṇa-samudāya*) was drawn up (cf. Bhāgavata 1. 17. 26-29 giving a list of thirty nine *Mahā-Guṇas*). Similarly we find here a contrasted list of moral lapses and faults which are condemned as nothing short of hell, all collectively named as *Puna-nāma Naraka* i. e. hell which a human being experiences here and now in his life on earth. This also is a novel interpretation of the ancient words *Puna-nāma Naraka* of which we find an explanation for the first time in the *Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa* connecting it with the etymology of the word *Putra*. The only connection here invoked with *Putra* is that every worthy son of a worthy father should avoid the evil ways.

A similar list is drawn up in respect of sons. We find here a new theory of the relative importance of a son and a disciple in which it is stated that the *Putra* redeems his father from a large number of moral lapses whereas the pupil as *Śishya* from only the remaining ones. (*Śishyāt śresaṭhataraḥ Sutaḥ*, Vn. 61.29). It appears that the Brāhmaṇa father concentrated on building the moral and spiritual life of their sons expecting them to continue their tradition more faithfully and in a fuller manner. However, it is recommended that the son and the pupil should be given equal treatment (*Sadharmaḥ suta-śishyayoḥ*, Vn. 61.28).

Sanatkumāra claiming his descent from Brahmā insists on receiving from him the doctrine of *Yoga*. Brahmā at first refuses directing him and his brothers to go to their parents, viz. *Dharma* and *Ahiṁsā*. This is new conception of the traditional account of the parentage of the four Sanatkumara brothers who were known as the *Sādhya* sages. Here it is a strange mingling by describing them as sons of *Dharma* and *Ahiṁsā* and as pupils of Brahmā. *Dharma* and *Ahimsā* as the names indicate were the two cardinal elements of Buddnist way of life which the *Bhāgavaatas* had accepted *in toto* and given them an equally high place in their doctrine. *Dharma* and *Ahiṁsā* redirect their sons to Brahmā to entreat him to reveal the doctrine of *Yoga* which Brahmā does. According to other sources Hiraṇyagarbha was the promulgator of the *Yoga* doctrine from whom it descended to a succession of teachers headed by Sanatkumāra, Nārada and others. Strangely enough instead of meeting with a systematic exposition of the *Ashṭāṅga Yoga-vidyā* as

is usually found in similar Purāṇic contexts. Brahmā expatiates on the virtues of the *Bhāgavata* formula *"Om Namaḥ Bhagavate Vāsudevāya"* which is styled as *Dvadaśa-patraka* form of Vishṇu and constituting the essence of *Yoga.* In an ingenious manner each sylladle of this mantra is equated with one month of the year and one sign of the zodiac forming as it were the petal of a full-blown lotus flower. Further by associating one syllable with a particular limb of the body the full figure of Akshara Purusha is created as follows :—

1.	Om	Śikhā	Mesha	Vaiśākha
2.	Na	Mukha	Vṛisha	Jyesṭha
3.	Mo	Arms	Mithuna	Āshāḍha
4.	Bha	Eyes	Karkaṭaka	Śrāvaṇa
5.	Ga	Heart	Siṁha	Bhādrapada
6.	Va	Bust	Kanyā	Āśvina
7.	Te	Manas	Tulā	Kārttika
8.	Vā	Navel	Vṛiśchika	Mārgaśīrsha
9.	Su	Waist	Dhanu	Pausha
10.	De	Thighs	Makara	Māghe
11.	Vā	Knee	Kumbha	Phālguna
12.	Ya	Feet	Mīna	Chaitra

In that period each one of the sects was claiming the efficacy of a Bījākshara or *Uddhāra-mantra* for each letter of its creed-formula like *Om Namaḥ Śivāya, Namaḥ Bhagavate Buddhāya, Namo Arhantānam,* etc. and on the same line the *Bhāgavatas* bestowed the highest sanctity and mystical potency on their *Bīja-mantra* as explained here. They were convinced that the muttering of the name of *Bhagavān* Vāsudeva was in no way less efficacious than the practice of *Yoga.* They sincerely held that the knowledge of the formula would lead to liberation :—

यस्मिञ्ज्ञाते मुनिश्रेष्ठ न भूयो मरणं लभेत् । (Vn. 61.67)

It was the same as the attainment of *Nirvāṇa* by uttering the name of Buddha. As a matter of fact the twelve-syllabled formula (*Dvādaśāksharī mantra of Vishṇu*) has been compared to a *Chakra* with twelve spokes (*Dvādaśāra*) with tri-partite manifestation (*tri-vyūha*) comparable to the *Tryadhvā* conception of the Buddhist wheel. It is clearly stated that Vāsudeva in his unmanifest form *Avyakta mūrti* is one, but for the sake of his creative activity he asssumes the form of three

Devas as Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva identified with the three *Guṇas* as follows ;—

1. *Avyakta Vāsudeva mūrti, Sattva guṇa, Vishṇu* with four arms.
2. *Tāmasa mūrti* as Śesha with a thousand heads to be identified with *Rudra.*
3. *Rākashsa mūrti* as four-faced *Brahmā,* the Creator.

These are said to be the three manifest forms of the unmanisested transcendent being :—*Avyāktat sambhavantyete trayo vyaktā mahāmune.* This is a statement of the *Chatur. Vyūha* doctrine of the *Bhāgavatas* knowingly projected in this context.

After this the story of Mura is resumed saying that he appeared before Vishṇu who asked him the reason of his coming. The *Asura* said that he had come for a battle with him. Vishṇu pooh-poohed him by saying that he would not fight with a coward whose heart was already palpitating with fear. The *Asura* was confounded and he pnt his hand on his breast to feel his heart and as soon as this was done he losr all his vigour whereupon Vishṇu did short work of him with his *Chakra.* Thus he earned the name of *Murāri.*

In Ch. 60 it has been said that Śiva having spent a thousand years engrossed in delusion (*Moha*) decided to undergo *Tapas* :—

यदा वर्षसहस्रं तु महामोहे स्थितो भवः।
तदाप्रभृति निस्तेजा हीनवीर्यः प्रदृश्यते ॥
स्वमात्मानं निरीक्ष्याथ निस्तेजोंऽशं महेश्वरः।
तपोऽर्थाय तदा चक्रे मतिं मतिमतां वरः॥

Ch. 62 takes up the same thread that Vishṇu being informed by the *Devas* of the cosmic commotion caused by Śiva's penance went to *Mandara* mountain with his party but found it deserted. He asked as to the whereabouts of Śiva and the inmates of *Mandara* replied that he had gone for *Tapas.* Vishṇu told them that Śiva was present there but they were not able to see him since they were stained with guilt. It so happened that Śiva and Pārvatī were having a solitary retreat for dalliances after marriage and Agni somehow smuggled himself into his privacy with the flight of *Haṁsa* and thereby disturbed Śiva. When the *Devās* waiting to meet him were announced by Agni, Śiva came out to meet them and his seed was taken up by Agni which was transferred to Kuṭilā's water and from there to the grove of Reeds (*Śaravaṇa*).

This story although crudely framed aims at the identity of the *Tejas* of Rudra with Agni, a Vedic idea often repeated in the *Brāhmaṇas* (*Agnir vai Rudraḥ*, ŚB. 5. 3. 1. 10 ; *Yo vai Rudraḥ so Agniḥ*, ŚB. 5. 2. 4. 13, *Saisho Rudraḥ yad Agniḥ*, Tait. Br. 1. 1. 5. 8-9 ; *Tvam Agne Rudraḥ*, RV. II. 1. 6). Rudra with his consort Umā in eternal union and dalliance is one aspect, but since Śiva is a *Yogī* there could be no emission of his seed even if they remained in permanent enjoyment. Therefore the latter part of the story presents the second aspect of the emission of the *Tejas* of Śiva and its transference first to Agni which was Śiva's own form and then to Kuṭilā or *Sushumnā* and finally being produced as Kumāra or *Prāṇāgni* in the forest of reeds which is the human body itself.

The depletion of Śiva's energy and the performanca of *Tapas* for replenishing it are a Purāṇic statement of the Vedic idea about *Prajāpati* who becomes emptied (*ririchāna*) after every creative act and then refills himself by the potency of *Tapas*. In each organic centre where the law of life is functioning this rhythm of rise aud fall is present. Each time *Prajāpati* after his procreative act must be rejuvenated in order to continue the process over again. This law of being is justified in the *Saṃvastara* or year in which each autumn is followed by a spring and then alone the wheel rotates in rhythmical vibration. Rudra is *Mahādeva.* The decline in his power affects all other gods who are but his subordinate powrs. The gods therefore lost the faculty of obtaining a vision of Śiva's presence and Vishṇu-advised them that they too should undertake like Śiva the purifying vow of *Tapta-Kṛichchhra.*

Although the name *Tapta-Kṛichchhra* has been used but in addition to keeping fast etc. a new rite of Śiva-worship by means of holy jars of milk, curds, butter, honey, *pañchagavya* etc. has been prescribed.

Having purified themselves the Gods asked Vishṇu as to where Śiva's presence could be seen for actual worship because they were not finding him. Vishṇu pointed to his own heart where Śiva was present in the form of a *Liṅga* saying that the god was to be worshipped there. The *Devas* did actually offer their worship to Śiva in the heart of Vishṇu. This story shows the climate in which the reconciliation or synthesis of the two cults of Śiva and Vishṇu was-

carried out by the *Māheśvaras* and the *Bhāgavatas*. Here Nārada puts a specific question to Pulastya as to how the two opposite principles of *Sattva* as Vishṇu and *Tamas* as Śiva could be combined together at all :—

इत्येवं चिन्तयन्तस्ते देवदेवौ हराच्युतौ ।
कथं योगं तमापन्नौ सत्त्वेन तमसा वृतौ ।। (Vn. 62.72)

A graphic description of the composite iconographic form of Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa, or Harihara-mūrti is given as follows :—

सार्द्धद्विनेत्रं कनकाहिकुण्डलं जटागुडाकेशखगर्षभध्वजम् ।
समाधवं हारभुजङ्गभूषणं पीताजिनाच्छन्नकटिप्रदेशम् ।
चक्रासिहस्तं हलशार्ङ्गपाणिं पिनाकशूलाजगवान्वितं च ।
कपर्द खट्वाङ्गकपालघण्टं सशङ्खटङ्काररवं महर्षे ।।
(Vn. 62. 29-30)

Chakra, *Khaḍga* (*Nandaka*), *Hala* (ploughshare) and *Śārṅga* (Bow) and *Śaṅkha* in the five hands of Vishṇu ; *Pināka* (Bow), *Triśūla* (Trident), *Ājagava* (another kind of bow), *Khatvāṅga*, a *Kapāla* and *Ghaṇṭā* in the hands of Śiva. In one half was the hair in matted lock and in the other curly locks ; on one side was a necklace and on the other a serpent ; in one ear a golden ear-ring and in the other a snake. The one half was clad in *Pītāambara* and the other in tiger's skin. Such form of Hari-Śaṅkara image was endowed with two and a half eyes.

Vishṇu perceiving the *Devas* thus thrown in the mood of meditation retired to his hermitage in Kurukshetra. There the gods found Śiva in the form of *Sthāṇu-Īśvara* in the midst of *Sthāṇu* lake and recited a *Stotra*. The God was pleased and the *Devas* departed to their places.

Śiva then circumambulated *Samanta-Pañchaka* and saw Śukra in the Auśanasa *Tīrtha* performing *Tapas* on the Oghavatī. On being asked the reason Śukra said that he wanted to learn the secret of *Sañjivinī-vidyā*. Śiva granted his request.

From there Śiva proceeded to *Sapta-Sārasvata Tīrtha* where he found *Ṛishi* Mankaṇa engaged in *Tapas*. The same story about Mankaṇa which we have already explained in Ch. 38 is repeated. It is said that the Seven streams of Sarasvatī named, *Suprabhā Kāñchanākshī*, *Suveṇu*, *Vimalodakā*, *Mahodarā*, *Oghavatī*, and *Viśālā* (Sarasvatī)

flowed in Sarasvatī in a mingled stream known as *Sapta-Sārasvata* in Pṛithūdaka. Śiva then asked Mankaṇa to instal a Śiva *Liṅga* in Kurukshetra and depart for *Brahma-Loka* which the latter did and Siva returned to his *Āśrama* on the *Mandara* hill.

Ch. 63 resumes the story of Andhaka who had gone to *Pātāla.* Being afficted by the arrows of love he asked his followers to bring Pārvatī to him. Thereupon Prahlāda revealed to Andhaka the fact that the latter's father being without issue had asked Śiva's boon for a son. Śiva's eye was closed by Pārvatī at the time of their dalliances and the darkness thus created beeame transformed into a male child who became that very Andhaka given by Śiva to his father. Śiva also had observed that Andhaka who adopted ways of evil should be slain by him. Prahlāda added that for this reasan Śiva was really the father of Andhaka and Pārvati his mother. He should not therefore turn his mind to such an act of sin. To drive home his point Prahlāda recited the story of a king named Daṇḍa who was destroyed for committing sin on Virajā, daughter of Śukra, against her wishes. Another short inset is given here of the love story between Chitrañgadā, daughter of Viśvakarmā, and a prince named Suratha to whom the former surrendered herself. Her father cursed her that she would be bereft of the merit of obtaining a husband. On this prince Suratha was carried away by the current of Sarasvatī. Chitrañgadā fainted at the loss of her husband. Then her companions sprinkled the water of Sarasvatī by which she regained her consciousness. Then the river Kāñchanākshī carried her also into a jungle. Since this was the result of womanly fickleness, Virajā said that she would not follow the example of Chitrāngadā.

The story takes a tortuous turn stating that a *Guhyaka* flying in the air took pity on Chitrāṅgadā and asked her to pay her homage to god Śiva in the *Śrīkaṇṭha Tīrtha* on the banks of the Yamunā. By the efficacy of this act of her a *Pāśupata Āchārya*, a follower of *Sāmaveda* and named Ritadhvaja, took pity on her and cursed her father Viśvakarmā for dealing with her daughter in such a manner.

The *Pāśupata* teacher advised Chitrañgadā to go to the holy place named *Sapta-Godāvaram* where she would find her husband. Accepting this advice Chitrañgadā went there and worshipped Śiva named *Hāṭakeśvara* with three other maidens of *Guhyaka* family.

The *Pāśupata* teacher himself went to pay homage to Śiva named *Pushkaranātha* on the river Payoshṇi (Rāvī).

The implication of these very loose references is that intimate connection was established between the *Pāśupata* centre of *Mahārāshṭra,* most probably *Kayāvarohaṇa,* and the Kurukshetra region as is amply evident from the establishment of numerous Śiva *Liṅgas* at *Thāneśvara* and other places. We have the testimony of Bāṇa in the *Harsha-charita* to show how great was the influence of the *Pāśupata* teachers on king Prabhākakara Vardhana who had become their blind disciple and willing to make complete surrender of himself to their mystical rites.

Ch. 64 repeates a bunch of puerile stories about Śālukinī, Hiraṇyavatī and similar smaller rivers or streams of Kurukshetra which appear to be in the nature of local folk-tales. This chapter is a good example to show the decline in *Purāṇa* style, once it became dissociated with the sublime Vedic themes and legends. Here we find a cobweb of trivial stories.

In Ch. 65 the same style is continued excepting the indication that the *Pāśupata* teachers had established another centre of their influence at Pushkara. Ṛitadhvaja is the type of *Pāśupata Parivrājaka Yogins* who were very powerful during the period of the *Thāneśvara* dynasty of Prabhakara Vardhana and Harsha Vardhana, spreading themselves at all important centres in north India. The Purāṇa writer gives to them the title of Ṛishis. One of them named Ṛitadhvaja distinctly mentioned as a *Pāśupata Āchārya,* follower of *Sāmaveda,* is instrumental in bringing about a link between Kurukshatra, the Vindhya mountain and near it the Kolāhala hill, and finally *Sapta-Godāvaram Tīrtha* [Pithapuram (16 miles) not far from Rājmahendrī in the Godāvari District]. There on the banks of the Godāvarī was a Śiva *Liṅga* named *Hātakeśvara* worshipped by Ṛitadhvaja and all the other male and female characters of the story. An impresssive *Stotra* of Śiva containing 84 epithets and recited by Chitrāṅgadā is given in the same prose style as seen earlier in the *Śiva-Stotra* in Ch. 44 containing 94 epithets, and *Vishṇu-Stotra* by Kaśyapa in Ch. 26 containing 100 epithets. All these three have drafted their material from a common inspiration and appear to be of the nature of *Nāma-Śataka Stotras* i.e. Recitals of Hundred Names.

In this long chapter we also find a caricature of Viśvakarmā in the form of an Ape who was cursed by Ṛitadhvaja, a *Pāśupata* teacher, to assume this form because he had not given away his daughter in marriage to a proper husband. This daughter was Chitrāṅgadā who loved Suratha and figures prominently in the story and becomes finally united with her lover. The purport of this tangled skein seems to demonstrate the superior position of the *Pāśupata* teachers amongst all other sectaries, since they could pronounce a curse even on Viśvakarmā and also release him from its effect. Perhaps the story conceals an allusion to a rivalry between the Pāśupatas and the Bhāgavatas to the advantage of the former.

Ch. 66 turns back to the motif ot Śukra's daughter Arajā who turned down the overtures of love of Daṇda but was deprived of her modesty by the latter. When Śukra came back he pronounced a curse on Daṇḍa who fell in the Daṇḍaka forest which thus became the forbidden place for good men, a haunt for the *Rākshasas.*

Prahlāda by citing these examples wanted to dissuade Andhaka from his passion for Pārvati but the latter would not listen to the advice and sent Śambara on his mission of love. The *Asura* messenger visited Śiva on the Mandara hill and asked him to deliver both Mandarāchala and Pārvatī in favour of his master. Śiva replied that the Mandara hill was given to him by Indra and he alone could transfer it. As for Pārvatī she was perfectly free to decide herself. Thereupon Pārvatī said to Śambara that only he could have her who would defeat her in battle. Śambara came back and delivered the message to Andhaka who ordered his forces to march with a host of 28 *Asura*-chiefs including Jambha, Śambara, Bali, Bāṇa, Śibi, Virochana, Hayagrīva, Duryodhana, Kālanemi, Bala, Vṛitra etc. It is an impressive list which includes all *Asura* names in mythology and religion brought together for a concerted trial of strength against Śiva and Pārvatī.

When the *Asura* army reached the Mandara mountain Śiva also ordered Nandī to assemble all his *Gaṇas* and *Pramathas.* Many names of them are given here, but what is significant is the inclusion in this list of the several *Śaivas* like *Paśupatas, Kâlamukas, Mahāvratins, Maha-Paśupatas, Naigameyas* etc., and other followers of *Kumāra-cult.* This shows that the *Paśupatas* and the followers of all the sub-sects considered themselves on the side of Śiva and defenders af the

Śaiva faith. Śiva arranged the reception for all the *Gaṇas* that had arrived but extended a special embrace to the *Mahā-Pāśupatas* which surprised all others. Guaging the situation Śiva declared that all the other *Gaṇas* had in their religious worship made distinction between Śiva and Vishṇu not knowing their true nature and thus their minds were clouded by ignorance :—

भवद्भि र्भक्तिसंयुक्तैर्हरो भावेन पूजितः ।
अहंकारविमूढैश्च निन्दद्भिर्वैष्णवं पदम् ।। (Vn. 67. 26)

योऽहं स भगवान्विष्णुर्यश्चासौ सोहमव्ययः
नावाभ्यां वै विशेषोऽस्ति एका मूर्त्तिर्द्विधा स्थिता (Vn. 67. 27-28)

एकरूपं चैकदेहं कुरुध्वं यत्र चाश्रिताः (Vn. 67. 35)

Śiva further declared the unity of his form with that of Vishṇu in the follhwing incisive words :—

यत्नात्क्रकचमादाय च्छिन्दध्वं मम विग्रहम् ।
तथापि दृश्यते विष्णुर्मम देहे सनातनः (Vn. 67. 37)

"If you cut my body into twain with an edge-saw even then you will find the eternal presence of Vishṇu in my form". The basic doctrine of the *Purāṇas* is emphatically enunciated in this context that the Three *Devas*, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva being archetypes of the *Rajas*, *Sattva* and *Tamas* *Guṇas* are the triple manifestations of a single divine power :—

सात्त्विकं राजसं चैव तामसं मिश्रकं तथा ।
स एव धत्ते भगवान्सर्वपूज्यः सदाशिवः (Vn. 67. 42-43)

The *Gaṇas* headed by Śaila expressed their eagerness to know the true nature of Sadāśiva in answer to which Śiva revealed to them his true form.

All the *Gaṇas* saw in great wonderment that Lord Śiva had a thousand heads, a thousand arms, holding a club in his hands pervading all space, Then he appeared as a *Liṅga* with one face (*Eka-mukham*) and bearing on his person a thousand signs of Rudra and Vishṇu, half of him appeared as Śiva and the other half as Vishṇu. With bull vehicle he had the banner of Garuḍa, and with Garuḍa vehicle he had

the banner of a bull. As lord Śiva revealed these forms there were born the *Mahā-Paśupata* teachers.[1]

He was rapidly changing his form to appear as Śiva, Vishṇu, Brahmā and Sūrya. As the *Gaṇas* witnessed this phenomenon of the identity of the divine form they became freed from their sin. A conversion was wrought in the minds of *Gaṇas* and they asked for a boon from Śiva that they be purified of the sin which had entered them owing to their making a distinction between Śiva and Vishṇu :—

भिन्न दृष्ट्या महत पापम् यदाप्तं तत् प्रयातु नः । (Vn, 67. 56)

Ch. 68 describes how Śiva accompained by the *Gaṇas* marched against the *Asura* hosts of Andhaka. In his retinue were not only

१. सहस्रचक्रचरणं सहस्रभुजमैश्वरम् ॥
दण्डपाणिं सुदुर्दृश्यं लोकैर्व्याप्तं समन्ततः ।
दण्डसंस्थानि दृश्यन्ते देवप्रहरणानि च ॥
ततस्त्वेकमुखं भूयो ददृशुः शंकरं गणाः ।
रौद्रैश्च वैष्णवैश्चैव वृतं चिह्नैः सहस्रशः ॥
अर्द्धेन वैष्णववपुरर्द्धेन हरविग्रहः ।
खगध्वजं वृषारूढं खगारूढं वृषध्वजम् ॥
यथा यथा त्रिनयनो रूपं धत्ते गुणाग्रणीः ।
तथा तथा च जायन्ते महापाशुपता गणाः ॥
ततोऽभवच्चैकरूपी शंकरो बहुरूपवान् ।
क्षणाच्छ्वेतः क्षणाद्रक्तः पीतो नीलः क्षणादपि ॥
मिश्रको वर्णहीनश्च महापाशुपतस्तथा ।
क्षणाद्भवति रुद्रेन्द्रः क्षणाच्छंभुः प्रभाकरः ॥
क्षणार्द्धाच्छंकरो विष्णुः क्षणाच्छर्वः पितामहः ।
ततस्तदद्भुततमं दृष्ट्वा शैलादयो गणाः ॥
अथाजानन्त चैक्येन ब्रह्मविष्णिवन्द्रभास्करम् ।
यदा त्वभेदेनाजानन्देवदेवं सनातनम् ॥
तदा निर्धूतपापास्ते समजायन्त पार्षदाः ।
तेष्वेवं धूतपापेषु अभिन्नेषु हरीश्वरः ॥
प्रीतात्मा विबभौ शंभुः प्रीत्या युक्तोऽब्रवीद्वचः ।
परितुष्टोऽस्मि सर्वेषां ज्ञानेनानेन सुव्रताः ॥
वृणुध्वं वरमानन्त्यं दास्ये यो मनसेप्सितम् ।
ऊचस्ते देहि भगवन्वरमस्माकमीश्वर ।
भिन्नदृष्ट्या महत्पापं यदाप्तं तत्प्रयातु नः ॥ (Vn. 67. 45-56

Nandī and others but also the *Mahā-Pāśupatas* (Vn. 68 19). Here follows one of the most powerful and inspired descriptions of the *Daivāsuram* battle in which the *Asuras* and the *Gaṇas* were pitched against each other. This description is cast in the rhythmic classical metres like *Upa-jāti* (Vn. 68.36-37, 45-56), *Upendravajra* (39), *Indravajrā* (40.43) We find here a new quality and vigour of classical Sanskrit bouyant racy style moving like a forceful stream and drawing within its whirpool many motifs of religion and mythology as propounded by the *Mahā-Pāśupatas* and *Mahā-Bhāgavata* movements for popular delectation. The motif of the conflict between *Devas* and *Asuras* which began in the time of *Ṛigveda* with Indra on the one hand and Vritta, Śambara, Vala and Namuchi, his adversaries on the other became the most conspicuous motif of Indian religion and art. During the Gupta period it received fresh elaboration which is reflected in this description. It appears that all the cyclopean giants and *Asuras* of Brobdignagian stature have been brought together on one stage in a fight to the finish with Sovereign God *Rudra Mahādeva* and his irresistible *Gaṇas.*

In a fight between Nandī on the one side and Kujambhaka and Hastī on the other the latter two were slain. Hasti's son Duryodhana was killed by Skanda. A short account follows of the battle between the *Asura* Nandsena and the four brothers Viśākha, Śākha, Naigameya and Skanda who are stated to have been the sons of Śiva (*Tribhiḥ-Śankara-sutaiḥ,* VN. 68.63 ; *Chaturbhiḥ Śankarātmajaiḥ,* Vn. 68.63 ; 68.63). In the cult-worship and iconography as they prevailed in the early centuries of the Christian era, Skanda, Kumāra, Mahāsena and Viśākha were regarded as the four brothers, as depicted on the coins of Huvishka, but sometimes there was a variation in the names as in the *Matsya* (Chs. 159-163 ; see my book Matsya Purāṇa-a Study, p. 247) and here Naigameya is also included in the list. Kumāra so much pressed Jambaka in battle that he fled from the fleid.

Ch. 69 continues the *Daivāsuram* description. After the *Asura* army had been broken Andhaka approached his teacher, Śukrāchārya and acquainted him with the plight of the *Asuras.* Thereupon Śukrāchārya re-invoked the *Sañjīvinī-vidyā* by which the dead *Asuras* were brought back to life again. When Kujambha and other *Asura* chiefs were revivified Nandī reported the matter to Śiva and said that all

their labour on the field of battle had been rendered useless by the magical performance of Śukrāchārya. Śiva asked Nandī to bring Śukrāchārya to his presence. When the former entered the *Asura* camp they began to wound him but somehow Nandī managed to seize Śukra and bring him before Śiva. It is said that Śiva put him in his mouth and swallowed. In Siva's belly Śukra recited a Stotra by which the deity was propitiated and granted Śukra a boon. Śukra asked that he should be ejected from his mouth. Śiva granted his wish. A description is given here of the cosmic vision that Śukra obtained of the form of God in his womb. It was that he saw the maximum limits of both Time and Space confined within the body of Śiva, more or less similar to the vision of *Ṛishi* Mārkaṇḍeya when he was swallowed by Vishṇu as stated in the *Āraṇyaka-Parva*. When Śukra was roaming inside the body of Śaṅkara seeking an outlet then he was ejected through the opening of Śiva's *membrum virile*, and therefore he became known by the name of Śukra. The implication of this story is that Śiva is the same as Bhṛigu and Śukra the descendant of Bhṛigu is none else than the virile energy of Śiva. Indeed one of the names of Śiva is *Bhṛigupati* which is an appellation of Agni also, from the root *Bhrasj*, to cook or boil. The reference is to the processing of the seed or *Śukra* within the body by the metabolic heat or the *Vaiśvānara* fire in the body. From the secretions released by the food that is eaten there is a regular succession of the seven *Dhātus*, each of which is the result of a sort of cooking or boiling or refinement through the body's chemistry until the seven *Dhātus* are obtained in the form of *Śukra* or Seed. Since Śiva and Agni are identical divinities, as very often stated in the *Vedas* and *Brāhmaṇas* (*Agnir vai Rudraḥ*, ŚB. 5.3.1.10 ; *Tvam Agner Rudraḥ*, RV. II. 1.6) therefore both are identified with Bhṛigu and with Seed (*Retas*) which is the quintessence of the power of Agni :—

ताभ्यः श्रान्ताभ्यस्तप्ताभ्यः संतप्तभ्योः (अद्भ्यः) यद्रेत आसीत्तद्भृज्यत यद्भृज्यत तस्माद्भृगुः समभवत् तद्भृगोर्भृगुत्वम् (Gopatha 1. 1 3.)। वायुरापश्च चन्द्रमा इत्येते भृगवः, Gopatha 1. 2. 8 :

वरुणस्य वै सुषुवाणस्य भर्गोऽपाक्रामत्स त्रेधापतद्भृगुस्तृतीयमभवच्छ्रायन्तीयं (साम) तृतीयमपस्तृतीयं प्राविशत्, Tāṇḍya 18. 9. 1.

तस्य (प्रजापतेः) यद् रेतसः प्रथममुददीप्यत तदसावादित्योऽभवद्यद् द्वितीयमासीत्तद्भृगुरवभवत्तं वरुणो न्यगृह्णीत तस्मात्स भृगुर्वारुणि, Ait. 3. 3।.

Here is a clear reference to the birth of Bhṛigu whose descendant was Śukra from the seed of the waters or the bodily secretions which are boiled or processed through the successive stages of the *Sapta Dhātus*. This Vedic doctrine is given the form of a legend in the Purāṇa. Being thus baptised by Śiva Śukrāchārya returned to the *Asuras*. The battle ensued with renewed fierceness. The *Asuras* who took part in this hand to hand fight are named as Andhaka, Śaṅkukarṇa, Bali, Virochana, Aśvagrīva, Vṛittra, Bāṇa. In this old description the *Purāṇa*-writer has tried to bring together the names of as many *Asura*-chiefs as possible because he wanted to present an elaborate picture of the traditional *Daivāsuram* motif which means an ever continuous battle between the *Devas* and the *Asuras*. It is because of this that he counts Duryodhana also amongst *Asura* hosts having made him the son of Hastī which hints at the fact that Duryodhana of *Kuru* family was actually a descendant of Hastin.

Andhaka, Saṅkukarṇa, Bali, Aśvagrīva, Vṛitra, Bāṇa, Hrāda, Solka, Triśīras, Dvimūrdhan, Virūpadhṛik, Vidyunmālī, Naraka, Virochana, Jambha, Kujambha, Tuṇḍa, Tuhuṇḍa, Śambara, Hastī, Śaṁbhu, Śālva, Vārshaparva, Hayagriva, Kālanemi, Sallahāda, Kālanāśana, Śarabha, Bala, Bali, Duryodhana, Kāla. (Evaṁ Dvandaṁ sahasrāṇi Pramathanāñch Dānvaiḥ Vn. 69. 59).

In the raging conflict the *Devas* and the *Pramathas* were worsted by the *Asuras* and the *Dānavas*. Seeing this Rudra created a goddess named Jṛimbhābikā, the Yawning Mother. By her influence the *Asuras* gave up fighting and began to yawn with gaping mouths and physical langour on account of which all the *Devas* were disgorged from their mouth. The *Devas* freshly invigorated resumed fighting and this time it was the turn of the *Asuras* to be broken.

Thereafter Rudra sipped the holy water of Sarasvatī and began to perform *Sandhyā* and offered worship to Sūrya repeating the *Hiraṇyagarbha-Mantra*. With his 19 arms raised aloft Śiva began his dance. Following him the gods and the *Gaṇas* also began to dance. Śiva then decided to lead the divine army in battle against the *Asuras*. Guaging the situation turned against him Andhaka counselled with his brother Sunda and said that his heart was centerd on Pārvatī and so he would go to seduce her in the form of Śiva. Sunda was to assume the form of Nandī, chief of Gaṇas, and to give them battle. The two *Asura*-

chiefs thus disguised entered Śiva's palace on the Mandara mountain. Pārvatī seeing Śiva in this condition at once asked her companions to bring a quantity of *Ghṛita*, rags, salt and curd to apply to the wounds on Śiva's body. Pārvatī probed the wounds to find out if his body was of Śiva and failing to see any sign of her husband she detected the fraud and slipped away. Andhaka pursued her and she then took shelter in a forest. Andhaka also ran after her. Then Pārvatī out of fear entered the white flower of the *Arka* plant. Thus seeing Parvatī disappear Andhaka came back with Sunda to his army, and restarted the battle. Vishṇu came on the scene and joined the fight, making short work of the *Asuras*. Brahmā also came and sprinkled holy water with his cosmic lotus which strengthened the divine army. Then Indra joined the fray and pulverized Bala with his thunderbold. Then Jambha heading towards Indra made the king of gods flee in fright. In this situation Jambha also threatened Indra who sought shelter with Vishṇu and requested him for a suitable weapon. Vishṇu advised him to ask a weapon from the God of Fire. Thereupon Indra approached Agni who gave him a *Śakti*.

Thus re-armed with *Śakti* Indra came in front of Jambha who hit the elephant *Airāvata* with a blow from his fist which killed the elephant. Thus worsted Indra turned back and began to come down towards the Earth, when the *Siddhas* and the Bards made him conscious of his power and promised to bestow on him the cosmic chariot *Jagadratha*. (Vn. 69. 123).

The conception of the *Devaratha* was rooted in Vedic origin where the whole cosmos with all its heavenly and earthly powers is conceived of as a mountain-chariot moving for ever by the dynamic power of Time (*Kāla-Chakra*), which contributes both to immortality and death, each god obtaining his majesty by taking his seat on such a chariot. This is not an ordinary material conception of a chariot but all the powers of the Soul, Mind, Intellect, and Senses of Knowledge and Action, and the higest virtues of the moral order are inherent in the conception of this chariot. Śiva in his exploit against Andhakāsura mounted such a chariot and so did Skanda in his compaign against Tarakāsura. The idea of the cosmic chariot for the Sun-god is also found in the *Yajurveda* and in the *Matsya-Purāṇa* (see my *Matsya-Purāṇa-A Study* pp. 210-212).

A strange story is introduced here about the birth of Mātali the famous charioteer of Indra. It is said that when Indra was given a chariot by the *Gandharvas* there was no charioteer and Indra not being able to manage both his weapon and the reins of the horses began to tumble down towards the earth which caused her to tremble. Seeing the earth quaking a *Ṛishi* named Ṡamīka placed his child on the trembling earth which split into two. One of them went to Indra and became his charioteer Mātali. The purpurt of this improvised legend is to hint at the companionship of the Vedic God Indra and Mātariśvā, the latter being the same as *Vāyu* or the symbol of *Prāṇa*. Indra as the symbol of mind and Mātali of *Prāṇa* both occupy a common chariot which is the body (*Śarīra-ratha*). In the *Ṛigveda* itself we find the hint about the identification of Indra as Mind. He is said to be Manasvān endowed with the faculty of thought (*Yo jāta eva prathamo manasvān devo devān kratunā paryabhūshat*, RV. 2.12.1) *Mātariśvā* is the name of the god of Wind or *Vāyu* which is *par excellonce* the symbol of *Prāṇa* or Breath. The power of Mind alone, howsoever great, is not enough to discharge the functions of the body which depend for its vital activities on *Prāṇa*. In this imagery of the chariot the body corresponds to the *Pañcha-bhūtas* or Matter of which the Earth is the symbol. The vital airs, *Vāyu* or *Prāṇa* belongs to the region of *Antariksha*. Indra is the lord of Heaven or *Dyuloka*, *Mātarisvā* of *Antariksha* is the connecting link between *Dyauḥ* and *Pṛithivī*. These definitions about *Mātariśvā* are explained in the *Brāhmaṇa*-literature, e. g. *Prāṇo Mātariśvā*, *Prāṇa* is Mātiriśvā (AB. 238); *Mātariśvā* belongs to *Antariksha*, (*Antariksham vai mātariśvans gharmaḥ*, TB. 3. 2. 3. 2.). The etymology of the word is *Mātari śvayate*, that which expands in the womb of the mother, the latter with reference to *Vāyu* being in the intermediate region (*Antariksha*) between Earth and Heaven. *Prāṇa* is intermediate between Mind and Matter. That which belongs to Mind goes to Indra and becomes the charioteer under the name of Mātali, and that which remains in association with earth is Ṡamīka.

It may be asked why the name Ṡamīka has been chosen as the father of Mātali. The reason is that *Śamī* represents the Earth or the principle of Motherhood whereas *Aśvattha* represents the father-principle or heaven. *Śamī garbha aśvattha* makes the two Fire Sticks of *Yajña*. Here Śamīka is the symbol of the power of Procreation i. e. in Mother

Earth. Mātariśvā *Prāṇo* as cited above (*Prāṇo vai Mātariśvā* AB. 2. 38) is the same as *Prāṇāgni*, or the Life-principle which is teriffic in nature but when cast in the mould of mother's womb becomes Śamī or pacified. As it is said :—

Prajāpati created Agni. He became frightened that Fire would burn him. Thereupon he pacified that fire with *Śamī*; that is why *Śamī* is so called (*Prajāpatir Agnim asṛijat soo' bibhet pra mā dhaksyatīti taṁ śamyāśamayat, tacchhamyāḥshamītvam,* TB, 1. 1. 3. 11); also *tad etatm śamyāśumyaṁs tasmāch chhamī* ŚB. 9. 2. 3. 37)

This doctrine of *Mātariśvā Prāṇa* identified with *Vāyu* reminds us of the *Maruts* as helpers of Indra in his fight against Vṛittrāsura. The same Vedic idea is brought here in the form of a legend about the birth of Mātali. Then follows an account of a physical battle in which Indra is pitted against the *Asuras*. Indra wielded his great bow with arrows of five colours and approached all the gods of *Sāttvika, Rājasa* and *Tāmas* qualities.

सशरं पंचवर्णं तत्सितरक्तासितारुणम् । पाण्डुच्छायं सुरश्रेष्ठस्तज्जग्राह समार्गणम् ।।
ततस्तु मनसा देवान् रजःसत्त्वतमोमयान् । नमस्कृत्य शरं चापे साधिज्ये विनियोजयत् ।।

This reference to the three *Guṇas* is significant indicating that the whole triadic pattern of the cosmos came to the help of Indra in his fight against the *Asuras*. If put in Vedic terminology it would be the same as saying that the gods *Vasus, Rudras* and *Ādityas* were at the back of Indra. These threee types of *Deva-Gaṇas* with the 2 *Aśvins* constitute a complete circle or *Maṇḍala* of power which is typified in Vedic symbolism as the *Trayastrimśad Devaḥ* or Thirty-three Gods.

The five colours of Indra's arrow also imply a symbolical reference, viz. the five-fold cosmos or the five elements of gross Matter, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Sky, which are distinguished from one another by their colours. All these five represent the pentadic or five-fold constitution of the universe and are employed by Indra as his weapon or symbol of power. In this battle Kujambha was killed by Vishṇu and Jambha by Indra. This also is purposeful. In the *Ṛigveda* Indra and Vishṇu are said to be companions (cf. Vishṇu-described as इन्द्रस्य युज्यः सखा, RV. I. 22.19 ;. *Sakhe Vishṇo vitaraṁ vikramasva,* ṚV. VIII. 100. 12). In later Sanskrit Vishṇu is called

Upendra, younger brother of Indra (also *Indrāvarāja*). In Ṛigveda VI. 69.8 the pair of Indra and Vishṇu is said to exist as inseparable from each other, the two together producing Three Thousands (*Tredhā sahasram*) or the Three Infinities of Mind, Life and Matter (*Manas, Prāṇa, Vāk*). Jambha and his brother Kujambha also require to be explained. This is a pair referring to heaven and earth which together constitute the two Jaws of the Cosmos which in the *Vedas* are clearly mentioned (*Nānā hanū vibhrite*, RV. X. 79.1). Cosmic Agni in its two aspects of Agni and Indra is munching these worlds and chewing his cuds which are symbolised as Jambha and Kujambha. The mouth is composed of two jaws which in the divine pattern are known as Indra and Agni and therefore in the *Purusha Sūkta* it is said that the two gods Indra and Agni were produced from the mouth of the Creator (*Mukhād Indraśchāgniścha*, RV. X. 90.13). In other words *Dyāva-Prithivī* stand as the two gaping jaws in the mouth of the Creator moving like a grinding mill. Jambha and Kujambha symbolise the *Āsuric* aspects of the basic quality whereas Indra and Vishṇu stand for its divine nature. Having thus vanquished Jambhāsura Indra waited upon the great god Mahādeva who was the supreme power behind the *Daivasuram* conflict.

Ch. 73 resumes the account of the battle between Andhaka and Śiva. Having yoked his chariot the *Asura* advnaced against Indra, Vishṇa and Śiva. Seeing the hosts of *Devas* pitted against him Andhaka taunted Śiva that on one side he was alone and on the other a number of gods and therefore it was not a fair trail. Thereupon Śiva withdrew all the gods into his body, and challenged the *Asura* to a single combat. During the fight Andhaka hit Śiva on the head with his mace owing to which blood flowed from Śiva's head. As a result first appeared one *Bhairava* named Vidyārāja, then a second *Bhairava* named Rudra. Then came out four other *Bhairavas* from Chaṇḍa to Kapāli ; then from the drops of blood fallen on the ground appeared the seventh *Bhairava* named Lalitārāja. The eighth *Bhairava* is called Vijhnārāja. Enraged at this Śiva put forth his whole strength and piercing Andhaka with his trident lifted him up in the sky. The blood flowing from the *Asura's* body drowned Śiva upto the neck. Thereupon sweat appeared on Śiva's brow from which a girl was produced. The drops of perspiration which fell on the ground gave birth to a boy. The girl became Charchikā, a goddess widely worshipped and following the

foot step of goddess Kātyāyanī of Vindyāchal roamed over the whole earth until she found a place for herself on the *Hiṅgula* mountain.

This is one of the most important references that we find in this *Purāṇa*. It implies two things, firstly that the goddess Charchikā was the presiding deity of mount *Hiṅgulā* in Baluchistan, secondly that this was an Indianization of the original goddess worshipped at *Hiṅgulāja* under the name of *Nani*. Hiṅgulāja is situated at the extremity of the Hiṅgula, range of the mountains in Baluchistan about 20 miles or a day's journey from the sea coast, on the bank of the Aghorā or Hiṅgulā or Hiṅgolā river. It is one of the fifty two *Śakti-Pīṭhas* where Satī's *Brahmarandhra* is said to have fallen (Nand Lal De, Geographical Dictionary, p. 75). The Goddess Durgā is known here by the name of Mahāmāyā or Kottarī. According to Captain Hard who visited the temple there is no image but the goddess is represented by an uncarved stone in a cave. The name Koṭṭarī reminds of the ancient knew South Indian nude Mother Goddess whose worship at one time seems to have prevailed from the Tamil land to the Himālayas, and in the west upto Baluchistan. Amogst the Tamalian the Great Mother Goddess was worshipped as Koṭṭavī. The Tamil classics like *Thirumandiram* speak of the worship of Śaktī, named Koṭṭavī, all over the Fine Maṇḍalas (ऐन्द मण्डलमुं ताविय ज्ञानम् । उमिषवदु पोलुम् तिरिवर्)। She is mentioned as Koṭṭavī in the *Harshacharita*. She became the mother of Bāṇāsura under the name of Koṭarā (*Bhāgavata*, 10. 63. 20). A Shrine to her was erected in the Himālayas. In Almora district, 12 miles from Loha ghat, is a place named Kotalgarh where there is a temple of Koṭṭavī who is believed to have been the mother of Bāṇāsura. The upper half of her body is covered by an armour and the lower half is nude. The story is that once Bāṇāsura fought with Vishṇu. In the battle *Asuras* were slain but more of them reappeared. Then the *Devas* joined and prayed to the Goddess who appeared as *Mahākālī* who killed the *Asuras* and also Koṭṭavī. Koṭalgarh really means the place of the nude goddess. This important fact indicates the prevelance of the mother goddess of South India to the most distant parts of the country in the Himālaya. There must be many other punctuating signs of the worship of this goddess in other parts of the country. For example, in the campus of the Banaras Hindu University there are four *Yaksha* shrines and

18

another shrine dedicated to the goddess *Koṭa māī,* about whose meaning and appellation nothing is known (See my Book *Harsha-Charita—A Cultural Commentary*, p. 134). According to Keśava, author of the Kalpa Dru Lexicon, Koṭṭavī is a name of Ambikā.

The fact that the goddess at Hiṅgulā is also being worshipped under the name of Koṭṭārī, a name nearest to *Koṭarā* of the *Bhāgavata* furnishes reliable proof that the worship of Koṭṭavai was spread throughout the length and breadth of the country showing that she was a Goddess whose worship has come down from the highest antiquity. According to the South Indian belief Koṭṭavai was originally an Ogress (*Rākshasī*) but later on she began to be worshipped as Umā or Durgā. This fits in very well with the belief in North India also, according to which goddess Koṭṭavī of Hiṅgulā was believed to be one of the forms of Ambikā where one of the severed limbs of Satī's body had fallen. In fact it is said to be of Satī *Brahma-randhra* according to *Tantra-Chūḍāmaṇi.*

According to Sir T. Holdich the shrine had been in existence before the time of Alaxendar, "for the shrine is sacred to the goddess Nanā (now identified with Śiva by the Hindus)" which *Asura* Banipāla (Sardana Palus of the Greeks) king of Assyria, removed from Susa in 645 B. C. to the original Sanctuary at Urakh (now Varka in Massopatamia), the goddess being Assyrian (De, Geographical Dictionary, p. 751). This information is of the highest significance showing that the original cave shrine at Hiṅgulāja belonged to the Western goddess Nanā whose worship spread over the whole of Iran, Baluchistan, Sindha and Afghanistan so that she was accepted as the Great Goddess by the Śaka-Kushāṇas who have represented her on their coins under the name of Nanā or Nanaiā. The word *Nana* was Vedic and meant Mother (*Upala-prakshaṇī nana*, RV. IX. 112. 3).

Thus the above evidence gives us several cultural strands; firstly that there was a very ancient cave shrine of a Mother Goddess at the place now called Hiṅgulāja. This goddess was at one time, probably during the age of the Indus Valley, known as Koṭṭavī. From there it was taken to the Tamil Land by the descendants of Turvasu who were the Cholas, Cheras and Pāṇḍyas as mentioned in the Purāṇas (See my Book Matsya Purāṇa—A Study, p. 147).

3. This goddess also became famous as Hiṅgulā Devī and her name was included in a standardised list of *Śakti Pīṭhas.* Under this form she was identified with Durgā or Ambālikā of North India in an overpowering attempt to integrate the innumerable local goddesses into a vast religious synthesis.

4. It appears that at the last stage in the evolution of the religious forms of the goddess she became known as Charchikā as mentioned in this verse of *Vāmana Purāṇa* :—

इत्येवमुक्त्वा वरदेन चर्चिका भूयोऽनुयाता गिरिविन्ध्यवासिनीम् ।
मही समन्ताद् विचचार सुन्दरी स्थानं गाता हिंगुलाकाद्रिमुत्तमम् ॥

(Vn. 70. 45)

The association of Charchikā with the Nanā goddess of Hiṅgulāja seems to have been brought about during the Gupta period. In the Supia inscription of Skanda Gupta found in Rewa district (erstwhile Rewah State) we have reference to a shrine of goddess Charchikā. Bāṇa in the *Harsha-Charita* refers to a goddess presiding over children whose name was Jāta-mātṛi Devī, i.e. the Mother Goddess of children who was worshipped on the Shashṭī Day. According to Śankara she was a cat-faced deity (*Mārjānanā Devī*) and figures of small children were painted near her feet. According to the Nānārthārṇava Saṅkshepa Lexicon (1.400) this goddess was called Charchikā. In the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* (Ch. 97) there is a reference to a shrine of the goddess Charchikā. Later on in the Medieval period also the worship of Charchikā continued as known from the Bhilsa inscriptions of Parmāra king Naravarma Deva who erected a temple for this goddess as she was the family deity of the Parmāra kings (Bhandarkar's List of Inscriptions. No. 1658 ; Archaeological Report of Western Circle, 1913-14, p. 59), Bāṇa in the *Kādambarī* also refers to the *Mātṛi Paṭa Pūja.* This was a goddess who was attended by a host of children (*Bahu-Bālaka-Vyākulā*) and it is evident that she was merged in the worship of the Buddhist goddess *Hārītī* who was also surrounded by many children. In fact according to the *Revatī Kalpa* of the *Kaśyapa-Saṁhitā* a large number of goddesses including several hundreds are mentioned as different forms of the one goddess named Jāt-hāriṇī, i. e. the destroyer of children which literally means the same thing as *Hārītī.* She was originally a blood-thirsty ogress but later on was assimilated to Buddhism and Hinduism under a

benevolent aspect, as the presiding goddess of children (See my Book *Harsha-Charita—A Cultural Commentary*, p. 65)

Thus the mention of the goddess Charchikā in Vāmana-Purāṇa and her association with Hiṅgulā opens up distant vistas of research into the antiquity of the vast and varied pantheon of the Mother goddess worship in the religious history of India.

Lord Śiva gazed with his piercing third eye for a full thousand years at the body of Andhakāsura held aloft on the top of his trident and thereby reduced him to a mere skeleton. Thus the king of *Asuras* was released of oll his sins. Aṅdhakāsura then came to know the transcendence of Lord Śiva and began to pray in a *Stotra.*

This *Stotra* by Andhaka recited in honour of Śiva is of the model of a *Śatanāma Stotra* (Vn. 70. 50-64) although it actually contains about 95 names. An analysis of the *Stotra* indicates its Vedic and classical character, the former by such epithets as *Triṇāchiketa, Tripādapratishṭha, Tridevaḥ, Tripushkara, Trayyāruṇi, Oṁkāra, Indra, Vashaṭkāra, Sahasrapāda, Sahasrākasha Haṁsa, Rudra, Pasupati, Śīva,* and *Traividya.* Śīva became pleased and granted Andhaka a boon. Then, in the highest exaltation of divine realisation, the *Asura* said ;—

अम्बिका जननी मह्यं भवान्वै त्र्यम्बकः पिता ।
वंदामि चरणौ मातुर्माननीयौ ममाधिकम् ।।

(Vn. 70. 67)

He also asked that all his physical and mental sins may be washed off and his Āsuric nature be purified, and *Bhakti* to Śiva may lodge in his heart forever.

शारीरं मानसं वाऽपि दुष्कृतं दुर्विचिन्तितम् ।
तथा मे दानवो भावो व्यपयातु महेश्वर !!
स्थिरा तु तव भक्तिश्च वरमेतं प्रयच्छ मे ।।

(Vn. 70. 68-69)

Śiva became pleased and granted his request and also accepting him as his *Gaṇa* named him Bhṛiṅgi.

Here it is to be noted that Andhaka of Purāṇic mythology is identified with sin similar to Vṛitra of Vedic legnds who is defined as *Pāpamā* (*Papamā vai Vṛitraḥ*, ŚB. 11. 1. 5. 7). The principle of *Pāpamā*

is of great significance in the *Ṛigveda* known as *Enas, Agas, Agha, Ripra, Aṁhas, Amīva, Ahi,* etc. All of these are but names of the principle of Darkness, Death and Description which are the sinful messengers of *Yama* (अघला यमदूताः, Atharva 1. 1. 9-10). These are all symptoms of moral and spirtual stagnation (*Pūti,* Atharva 1. 1. 2) in which the spirit is soiled by Matter and enveloped in Darkness. Vṛitra was so called as it concealed everything in his grip (*Sarvaṁ Vṛitvā śiśye Tasmād Vṛitro nāma,* ŚB. 1.1.3.4.). Vṛitra's mother was named Danu who produced brood of all the *Dānavas.* Vṛitra is the archetype and there were many other *Asuras* such as Namuchi, Śushṇa, Pipru, Chumuri, Dhuni, Varchin, Vala with whom Indra came into conflict and emerged triumphant by breaking their power. This is the inevitable role of Indra as the unconquerable hero (*Aparājita jetā*) to crush the *Asuras* and re-establish the kingdom of heaven. Indra's victory over Vṛitra is said to be his greatest exploit. It was clearly recognised in the *Ṛigveda* itself that the account of Indra's battle against Vṛitra was not a fact of history stereotyped in Time and Space but it was an ever recurrent phenomenon, as said in the *Ṛigveda* :—

अशत्रुरिन्द्र जनुषा सनादसि (RV. I. 102.8)

O Indra thou art eternally from your birth without an enemy

मायेत्सा ते यानि युद्धान्याहुर्नाद्य शत्रुं ननु पुरा विवित्से (RV. X. 54.2. ca).

All that men call thy battle is illusion; No foe hast thou today, nor erst hast found one :—

Indra-Vṛitra conflict symbolises the two opposit principles of Light and Darkness, of Truth and Untruth, of Immortality and Death of Good and Evil. This has been the supreme motif throughout the religions and philosophy of India. The *Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas* and *Kāvyas* accept this motif as the basis of their thought and have elaborated it in the form of many a legend. The battle between Śiva and Andhaka is an extension of the same motif and this primary pattern is found in many others as Śiva-Tripurāsura, Skanda and Tārakāsura, Devī and Mahishasura, Rāma and Rāvaṇa and Madhu-Kaiṭabha. It would be difficult to postulate an iota of historical truth for such tales of an arrowedly symbolical character. It should be recognised that mythology and history have different approaches, the former revelling in super-natural features and the latter in

normal human behaviour. Mythology is a recurrent phenomenon whereas history is fixed in time as unalterable facts. The former is purposeful to explain a metaphysical or religious idea, the latter is the unfoldment of the mundane aspects in the lives of men. The distinction between the two is patent. The *Vāmana-Purāṇa* and all other texts of its class specialises in accounts of the *Daivāsuram* conflict. (See My book *Vedic Lectures*, 1960, pp. 111-121, Ch. VII *Daivāsuram*). As the name implies Andhaka, the *Devas* symbolises the darkness of Matter which is the opposite of the principle of Light symbolised as *Devas*. After Andhaka's conversion, i.e. disappearance of darkness all the *Gaṇas* were released by Śiva to come out of his body which means that Divine Light filled the whole Space between heaven and earth. All the *Gaṇas*, with Nandī assembled round Śiva who showed them the new *Gaṇa-Pramatha* in the form of Bhṛiṅgī explaining his identiy as Aṅdhaka. Then the ideal Golden Age was re-established :—

यत्र कामदुघा गावः सर्वकामफला द्रुमाः ।।
नद्यस्त्वमृतवाहिन्यो ह्रदाः पायसकर्दमाः

(Vn. 70. 80-81)

Then the cows became wish-fulfilling mothers. The trees became wish-fulfilling of all desires. The rivers flowed with *Amṛita*-like water by which the lakes were filled with milky food. Thereafter Śiva came back with Bhṛiṅgī and others to his home on the Kailāsa mountain.

The former is purposeful to explain a metaphysical or religious idea, the other is the unfoldment of the mundane aspects in the lives of men. The distinction between the two is patent. The Vāmana Purāṇa, as all other texts of its class, specialises in accounts of the Daivāsuraṃ conflict. (See my Book, *Vedic Lectures* 1960, pp. 111-121, Ch. VIII Daivāsuram). As the name implies Aṅdhaka, the Asura symbolises the darkness of Matter which is the opposite of the principle of Light symbolised as Devas. After Andhaka's conversion, i. e. disappearence of darkness all the Devas were released by Śiva to come out of his body which means that Divine Light filled the whole Space between Heaven and Earth. All the Gaṇas with Nandī assembled round Śiva who showed them the new Pramatha in the form of Bhṛiṅgī explaining his identity as Aṅdhaka. Then the ideal Golden Age was re-established :

यत्र कामदुघा गावः सर्वकामफला द्रुमाः ।
नद्यस्त्वमृतवाहिन्यो ह्रदाः पायसकर्दमाः ॥
(Vn. 70. 80-81)

Then the cows became wishfulfilling mother. The trees became wishfulfilling for all desire. The rivers flowed with Amṛita-like water by which the lakes were filled with the milky food. Thereafter Śiva came back with Bhṛiṅgī and other to his home on the Kailāsa mountain.

Knowing that Śiva had come back Pārvatī who had concealed herself in the white flower of the Arka plant (Calotropis Gigantea) came out and greeted her husband who wrapt her with great joy.

The symbolism of the Arka plant was of Vedic origin. It is stated in the Brāhmaṇa literature that there are two kinds of Yajñas, one known as Aśvamedha on the cosmic plane and the other as Arka on the individual plane. Aśvamedha is the form of Aditya or Sūrya in heaven and Arka is that of Agni on earth (*Ayaṁ vā Agnirarkaḥ*, ŚB. 8. 6. 2. 19). Actually in the language of symbolism each individual is said to be an Arka plant vitalised by the immortal power of heavenly Āditya or the Supernal Sun of Universal consciousness (*Sa esho Agnirarko yat Purushaḥ*, ŚB. 10. 3. 4. 5). It is explicitly stated by the Brāhmaṇa writer that Prāṇa or the Life-principle is symbolised as the Arka plant (*Prāṇo vā Arkaḥ*, ŚB. 10. 4. 1. 23). Arka and Aśvamedha are compared to the basic duality of divine creation or cosmos which are also known as an opposite pulsating forces of Prāṇa and Apāna (*Prāṇāpāno vā etau devānāṁ yadarkāśvamedha*, TB. 3. 9. 21. 3).

The ŚB. elaborates the comparison of the Arka plant and the Purusha by saying that the leaves are like the ears, the flowers like eyes, the buds like the nostles. The two closing lids like the lips, the seed like the teeth, the cotton in the pod as the tongue and the root of the plant like the food. Thus an imagery of the Arka plant comparable with the Purusha is enunciated. The implication is that the vast temperature of the heat in the Sun is reflected in the form of the Arka plant growing on the earth, The reason why this symbolism was admitted is that the small Arka plant prospers during

the hottest month of the year deriving its life sap in response to the thermal action of the solar rays. When the rest of the vegetable kingdom anguishes the Arka plant feels happly in its greeting the Sun god or the Universal centre of energy.

In the Ṛigveda itself we find mention of the Arka symbolism, which is said to be measured out in material manifestation by the Prāṇic energy of the Gāyatra chant (*Gāyatreṇa prati mimite Arkam*, RV. I. 164. 24) and that each Arka or individual by the same inherent energy descending to him from the universal source creates a *Maṇḍala* for himself, in which he had his being and become (*Arakena sāma*, RV. I. 164. 24). Elsewhere in the Ṛigveda the Arka is said to be of the three-fold entities (*Arakas tridhātuḥ rajaso vimānaḥ*, RV. III. 26. 7), viz. Manas, Prāṇa, Vāk or Mind, Life and Matter which are measured out or manifested by the dynamic power of Rajas, or motion (*Rajaso Vimānaḥ*) and this Arka is there identified with Jātavedas Agni, i. e. the Fire in the body which is also compared to a *Gharma* or Pot kept boiling at a certain temperature which is exactly the nature of human body :—

अग्निरस्मि जन्मना जातवेदा घृतं मे चक्षुरमृतं म आसन् ।
अर्कस्त्रिधातू रजसो विमानोऽजस्रो घर्मो हविरस्मि नाम ॥
(RV. III. 26. 7)

The Purāṇa writer undoubtedly was fully knowledgeable in respect of this particular symbolism and has conceived that Pārvatī as the Female Energy of Śiva had concealed herself in the Arka plant as the Mother principle of individual life incarnating in Matter, and why her lord Śiva was engaged in combat against the Āsuric forces symbolised as Andhaka. Śiva became filled with over-flowing joy at seeing Pārvatī again and said to her that Andhkāsura who coveted her beauty was now rendered a slave at her feet. The Great God addressed Andhaka as his son, directing him to bow at the feet of the Goddess. Thereupon both Nandī and the new Gaṇa chief Andhaka prostrated themselves at the feet of Pārvatī. Andhaka recited a Stotra to Gaurī consisting of a string of 34 choice epithets (e g. Bhavānī, Loka-dhātrī, Janayitṛī. Skanda-mātā, Syandinī, Chetanā, Trailokyamātā, Dharitrī, Devatā Mātā, Śruti, Smriti, Dayā, Lajjā, Kāmasū, Prīti, Mahā-māyā, Sumāyā, Vaijayantī, Kāla-Rātri, Govinda-jananī, Sarva-devārchitā, Sarvabhūtārchitā, Vidyā, Sarasvatī, Mṛiḍānī, Vn. 70. 90). It is at once

obvious that this Stotra though of limited nature is pregnent with great meaning in which the goddess has been conceived with her Universal Majesty as Mahā-Māyā, Kāla-Rātri, Sarasvatī, etc. who is worshipped by gods and men as the source and sustainer of the Three Worlds. Pārvatī was propitiated and gave a boon to Bhṛiṅgī that he would become purified from three kinds of sins relating to Mind, Life and Matter.

पापं प्रशममायातु त्रिविधं मम पार्वति ।
तथेश्वरे च सततं भक्तिरस्तु ममाम्बिके ॥ (Vn. 7o. 91).

The word 'Bhṛiṅgī' as the new name of Aṅdhaka amongst of Gaṇas of Śiva is significant and denotes the principle of Mind which is verily comparable to the honey-sucking Bee. Both Nandī and Bhṛiṅgī form pair terms. Nandī literally is the principle of Ananda which is the nature of Kāma and Bhṛiṅgī as the associate of Nandī and given by Śiva and Pārvatī an equal rank with him symbolises the principle of Prāṇa which in the Vedas is called a Madhvada Suparṇa or the honey-eating bibd (यस्मिन्वृक्षे मध्वदः सुपर्णा निविशन्ते सुवते चाधि विश्वे । तस्येदाहुः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वग्रे, RV. 1. 164. 22). The sweet berry (*svādupippalam*) on the cosmic tree of existence is variously known as Madhu which is the symool of Prāṇa or the Life principle which each individual soul desires to eat. This idea of the Self as a honey-sucker which was Vedic in origin is translated in Purāṇic imagery as the Gaṇa Bhṛiṅgī in the family of Lord Śiva and mother Pārvatī. Thus the two equations are patent in their significance, namely, Nandī = Ānanda or Kāma, and Bhṛiṅgī = Life's sweetness or Prāṇa.

Ch. 71 takes up the story of Indra who was asked by Śiva to go to the Malaya mountain before he returned to Amarāvatī. The Asuras after their defeat were directed to go to the Nether-World (*Pātāla*). On their way the halted at the Malaya mountain and came face to face with Indra. A fresh battle ensued between Indra and the Āsuric hosts. There he conquered the Asura Pāka and obtained the title *Pāka-śāsana*. He also pierced the demon Pura with his arrows and there by became famous as *Purandara*.

This is entirely a Vedic motif chosen by the Purāṇa writer with a purpose. In the Ṛigveda we often find reference to Pāka as signifying immature understanding or density of intellect which is filled with darkness and has no discrimination of the cosmic mystery

(*Pākaḥ prichchhā manasā vijānana*, RV. I. 164-5). Indra on the other hand represents the principle of Mental illumination or higher intellecting wisdom as stated in the Ṛigveda (*Yo jāta eva prathamo manasvān devān kratunā parya bhūshat*, RV. 11.12.1). As soon as the central vital principle incarnates in the body on the plane of Matter the first principle coming into existence is that of Indra or Mind (*Manasvān Indra*) and it is the power of Mind with which he endows all other Devas incarnating in his train. This Pāka was then imagined to be an Asura or the Genius of Darkness. The Devas on the other hand were the powers of Light. Darkness is dispelled and that implies the victory of Indra over Pāk.

The other imagery is that of Purandara. In the Vedas Indra is said to have destroyed the 99 or 100 forts of the Asuras by which he came to be known as Purandara or Puram bhettā, smasher of forts. The symbolism of Pura was also patent in the Vedas where the body is called a Brahma-Pura or Aparājitā-purī (*Puraṁ yo Brahmaṇo Veda*, AV. 10.2.30). This Pura is variously conceived as one referring to the whole creation as a single city or the individual body presided over by the individual self known as its Brahma or Yaksha principle. We know from the Yajurveda that the Mind was spoken of as a miraculous Yaksha abiding in the heart of all creature (Yad pūrvaṁ Yaksham antaḥ prajānāṁ tanme manaḥ Śiva saṅkalpa mastu, VS. 34. 5.) The number of 99 Puras is also meaningful. The Devas are 33 and their counterpart the Asuras are thrice that number, viz. 99. The Deva principle correspond to the Ṛigveda or the diameter of the circle of personality and the Asura principle to the Maṇḍala or circumferance signifying the utmost limit of extension of the cnetre in its material manifestation, just as the circumference is thrice its diameter similarly is thrice the extent of Ṛik (*Trichaṁ Sāma*). This imagery is applied to the Deva and the Asura principle in relation to each other and thus the 99 Asuras stand as thrice the number of 33 Devas. Each Deva has its counterpart in the three-fold Āsuric manifestation on the plane of Mind, Life and Matter. The number of the Devas and Asuras is subject to a basic Law, Firstly, Deva is one (*Eko Devaḥ*) then it becomes Three as the Three Devas of Agni, Vāyu and Āditya or the triadic pattern of creation and then these 3 become 33 as the thrice-eleven Devas, and ultimately they become 3,000. The 99 Asuras represent the counter-part of the

33 Devas. The number of 3,000 Devas applies to the plane of Mind, that of 33 to the plane of Prāṇa and that of 3 to the plane of Matter. The real conflict betwern the Devas and Asuras is a trial of strength on the level of Prāṇic powers which accounts for the number of Asuras to be generally 99. In fact their number is innumerable as that of the Devas, for Each Prāṇic centre has to reckon with its Āsuric counterpart. There is also the idea of the 100 forts (*Śataṁ me pura ayasī rarakshan*, Ait. Up. 4.6).

Apart from the symbolical meaning in the epithet Purandara obtained by Indra there is also a historical background of the conflict between the Devas and Asuras being settled on the Malaya mountain. Here we are reminded of the statement mode in the Vāmana Purāṇa that Kāñchīpurī was the foremost capital when the list of the most excellent ones of each class (*Pravarānukīrtana*) was drawn up. This takes us to the capital of the southern Pallava empire which was a glorious period in the history of South India. During the age of the Sangama literature (Circa I to 3rd century A D.) the Jainas were in the ascendency in the relgious field. Gradually they gave place to the Buddhistic influence (Circa 4th-6th century) from about 600 A. D. onwards with the establishment of the power of Mahendra Varman and his son and successor Narsiṁha Varman Mahāmalla (Circa 600-650 A.D.). Brāhmanism in all its branches of religion and philosphy, art and literature asserted itself in the most vigorous form and became the universal religion under the influence of the Pallava emperors on the one hand and the great Vaishṇava leaders as the Alvars whose religion of devotion (*Bhakti*) carried the day on the other. Kāñchīpurī was the seat af scene of action where this gigantic trial of strength between the Brāhmanical Vedic and Bhaktī religion on the one hand and the religion of the Jaina and Buddhist sects on the other took place. It is against this background that we may understand the real meaning of these two references, viz. the importance of Kāñchīpurī (the Pallava capital) in the eyes of the Vāmana Purāṇa and also of the reference to the reassembing of the Devas and the Asuras on the Malaya hill in the south leading to a second route of the Asuras.

The geographical background of the Vāmana Purāṇa relates to the Kurukshetra where the Vardhana dynasty, to which Harsh-Vardhana belonged, was in power. We know from the *Harsha-charita of*

Bāṇa that Śaivism under the Pāśupata teacher shad become prebominant in the Kurukshetra or Śrīkaṇṭha Jana pada. The first two Pallava emperors were contemporaries of Harsha Vardhana. It was about the same time during the first half the 7th century A. D. that in the north and the south Brāhmanism completely reasserted its new position especially in the form af Śaivism. It was now the religion of the masses with its root in the Purāṇic literature.

It is clearly stated in the present context that it was God Śiva himself who was interested in the victory of the Devas over the Asuras in the south also and with that purpose deputed Indra to repair to mount Malaya :—

एतदर्थं सहस्राक्षः प्रेषितो मलयाचलम् ।
त्र्यम्बकेण मुनिश्रेष्ठ किमन्यच्छ्रोतुमिच्छसि ॥ (Vn. 71. 17)

In the latter part of chapter 71 is given the story of Diti who gave birth to the Marut-gaṇas whose number is stated to be seven fold seven. It is said that Diti, wife of Kaśyapa, after the defeat of her sons desired to become the mother of a son who should be powerful enough to slay Indra. She conceived and Kaśyapa leaving her alone in the hermitage went to the Udaya mountain. Indra found his opportunity and came to the Āśrama offering his services to lonely Diti. Once it so happended that Diti owing to abnormal delay in delivery felt extremely distress and after bath did not do her hair properly with the result that they fell on her feet. Indra finding a loop-hole in her routine entered through the nostrils her womb and saw there the fœtus and also its counterpart the chorionic embryo (*Jarāyu*). Indra formed a *Vajra* and cut the fœtus into seven portions :—

चिच्छेद सप्तधा (Vn. 71. 34).

The babe wept seven times :—

स चारोदीत् सुविस्तरम् (Vn. 71. 34).

In this commotion Diti was roused from sleep and Indra beeding the embryo child not to weep again hatched each part of the fœtus into seven further portions. These became the 49 Maruts.

ते जाता मरुतो नाम देवभृत्याः (Vn. 71. 37)

Indra came out with his Vajra form the womb of Diti and being much frightened by what he had done he began to apologise to Mother

Diti that the foetus was his future enemy and therefore he had to act in manner he did. Diti was at peace by the words of Indra and gave away the Maruts to the king of the gods. It is stated that Indra owing to his having cut into fragment his own kindred brotheren became known as *Gotra-bhid.* The symbolical meaning of the Marut gods each subdivided into seven goes back to the Brāhmaṇas and the Vedas. In the Śatapatha it is stated that the Maruts hosts are seven in number (*Sapta hi Maruto gaṇaḥ*, ŚB. 2.5.1.13, 5.4.3.17 ; TB. 1.6 23. 2.7.2.2). According to the ritual the cake (Puroḍāśa) inteded for the Marut gods is prepared in seven pots *Mārutaḥ sapta-kapālaḥ puroḍāśaḥ*, *ŚB.* 2.5.1.12). In fact the seven Marut gods are the Seven Prāṇas (*Praṇa vai Marutaḥ*, ŚB. 9.3.1.7). Their mother is Pṛiśni, Sudughā, that is the Universal Cow or Kāmadhenu, who is infinite nature herself and their father is Rudra. None of them is elder or junior in a team where all are brothers of equal rank :

अज्येष्ठासो अकनिष्ठास एते सं भ्रातरो वावृधुः सौभगाय।
युवा पिता स्वपा रुद्र एषां सुदुघा पृश्निः सुदिना मरुद्भ्यः॥
(RV. V. 60.5)

In the beginning there was one undifferentiated self-existent Prāṇic principle. He was Rudra for the sake of creation he became differentiated in seven. This is symbolised both as the Seven Ṛishis or the Sapta Aṅgiras sages or also as Sapta Maruts. In the course of evolution the Maruts or the Seven Prāṇas became associated with Indra who was the Madhya Prāṇa. It is the quality of Indra Prāṇa that it begins to disintegrate with his thunderbolt wherever it enters. The association of Indra with the Maruts resulted in the division of the Marut Prāṇa into further groups of seven each (*Sapta sapta hi maruto gaṇaḥ* ŚB. 9.3.1.25 ; VS. 17.85 (17.10.85) The names of these 49 Marut-gods are given in the Ṛigveda (VII. 56.59 ; V. V. 52 ; Pt. Madhusudan Ojha— *Devata Nivit* pp. 12 ; Pt. Motilal Shaitri's *Śatapatha. Brāhmaṇa,* Vol. 3, pp. 231-233, see also RV. X. 77. 1-8 and X. 78. 1-8 for a description of a Marut god).

The word meaning of Priśṇi is the apottest mother that is the power which exercises its force as a patential dichotomy expressed as black and white colours or a combination of different colours as in the solar rays. This duality is also spoken of that white and Black

Rajas which makes the Wheel of the Cosmos or the Solar Chariot revolve. The Maruts are therefore frequently spoken of as *Prakaīḍinah*. The seven frolicking sons of the mothers moving as a single team (*Siśūlana krīḍayaḥ sumātaro mahāgrāmaḥ*, RV. X. 78.6, see also RV. VIII. 8.7. 1-36, which is a long Marut-Sūkta with several other motifs), The thunderbolt of Indra with which he claft the head of Vṛitra is said to be hundred-jointed in the Ṛigveda (*Vi chid-Vṛitrasya dodhato vajreṇa śataparvaṇā śiro bibheda vrishṇinā*, VIII. 6.6., VIII. 76.2). This is a motif mentioned in the Purāṇa also.

There is a distinction made here between *Jarāyu* and *Ulba*, the former being the uniform mass of tissues sticking to the wall of the womb as its upper end; the *Ulba* is the foetus at the end of the umbilical cord. The former belongs to the undifferentiated region of Rudra and the latter to the differentiated realm of Indra where all the limbs of the foetus are separately formed by virtue of the seven-fold seven Prāṇic vibrations and centres The original conception of the mother Priśni was transferred in the Purāṇas to Diti who was wife of Kaśyapa. Aditi and Diti form a pair of the two aspects of creative energy the one which is immortal is called Aditi and the other which is mortal is Diti (*Aditi Ditiṁ cha*, RV. V. 62.8; IV. 2.11.). As Priśni or the two-coloured cow Aditi is said to be the mother of Marvts (RV. VI. 66.3). That was one aspect of the Maruts in the womb of Aditi, but they also exist in the womb of Dīti who was a counterpart of Aditi. Aditi is *Akshiti*; whereas Diti is Kshiti (AV. 11.8.26; Aditi is *Chitti* and Diti is *Achitti* (RV. IV. 2.11). Thus the same Maruts which had become seven-fold in the womb of Aditi, suffered further fragmentation in the womb of Diti. This Vedic idea was taken up in the Purāṇas and given the form of a short legend. The Matsya-Purāṇa depicts mother Diti as a very unhappy woman. She performed penances like a Ṛishi on the banks of Sarasvaiī in the Samanta-Pañchaka holy region of Kurukshetra for a hundred years, she subjected herself to rigorous austerities and then asked the Ṛishis to explain to her a *Vrata* which would win for her the love of her husband and the blessings of motherhood. The Ṛishis in reply explained to her *Madana-Dvādaśī Vrata*, observed on the 12th bright day of Chaitra.

This was done by Diti and Kaśyapa came to her full of affection and what loving Diti asked of him was a son who should be Indraśatru in the true sense of the term, i. e. competent to kill Indra, king

of the gods. In this connection the Purāṇa writer gives some directions which a pregnant woman was expected to follow (*Garbhiṇī-Vrata*). For one hundred years Diti observed the rules of purity, but one day she forgot to wash her feet before going to bed and Indra took advantage of this lapse and split the foetus into seven portions with his thunderbolt (*Vajreṇa śatadhā chakre garbhaṁ tridaśādhipaḥ*) and seven radiant Kumāras were born from the womb of Diti (*Tathā spata vai te jātā Sūryavarchasaḥ*, M. 7. 55).

The seven Babes began to cry and Indra, the wielder of thunder-bolt, parcelled them out into 49 portions. Even then they did not stop crying and Indra ordered them not to weep (*Mā rudat*, M. 8. 62) and hence they became known as Maruts. (See my *Matsya Purāṇa-A Study*, pp. 75-76).

Ch. 72 continues the account about the previous births of the Marut Gods. In reply to a question of Nārada, Pulastya replied as follows :

In the beginning lived Svayambhū Manu. His son was Savana, who died childless. His wife Suvedā lamented for him. She began to cry embracing the body of her dead husband. Upon this the heavens took pity on her and a voice said, O Princess, do not cry.

ततोऽन्तरिक्षादशरीरिणी वाक्प्रोवाच मा राजपत्नीह रौत्सी ।
सोऽथाब्रवीन्मा रुदस्व । (Vn. 72. 7 ; Vn. 72. 9)

Soon you will be blessed with seven sons in case you mount the funeral pyre.

पुत्रास्ते वै भूमिपालस्य सप्त भविष्यन्ति वन्हिमारोह शीघ्रं सत्यं प्रोक्तं श्रद्धस्व ॥
(Vn. 72. 9).

Thus addressed she ascended the pyre. With the merit of her action the king revived and produced on her a number of sons who became rulers of the earth. Then by the miraculous power of Yoga he rose into the sky and at that moment his wife became in her course. With a view that her period may not be transgressed he came down to the earth and fell in a pond where his semen got mingled with the water. King and his wife ascended to Brahma-Loka. There the wives of the Seven Sages, named Samadā, Nalinī, Pushyatī, Chitrā, Viśālā, Haritāli and Nīlā saw that seed within the stalk of the lotus

and considering it to be of the nature of *Amṛitam* took bath in the pond and with the permission of their husbands drank the water of the lake.

पपु: पुष्कर संज्ञितम् ॥ तच्छुक्रम् । (Vn. 72. 17-18).

They became with child and gave birth to seven terrific children crying aloud :—

सुषुवु: सप्त तनयान्रुदतो भैरवं मुने । (Vn. 72. 20).

The whole world was filled with their crying. Thereupon Brahmā approached them and said '*Mā rudadhvaṁ mahābālāḥ*', (Vn. 72. 21). You will be known as Maruts. They became the Maruts of the Svayāmbhū period. Then the story takes a new turn about the birth of the second host of seven Maruts in the period of Svārochisha Manu. His son was Ṛitadhvaja, who had seven sons. They went to the Meru mountain to perform penances. Indra became frightened and sent a celestial nymph named Pūtanā. She went to have her bath in a river where the seven princes also went and their minds became disturbed at her sight. Their semen mingled in water which was drunk by a female aligator named Śaṅkhinī. She was caught in a net and taken to the seven sons of Ṛitadhvaja who nursed her in a pond. She also gave birth to seven sons who began to cry and were as in the case of previous ones asked by Brahmā not to weep :

मा रुदध्वमितीत्याह स्वस्थास्तिष्ठत पुत्रका: । (Vn. 72. 39)

The story continues the birth of the third host of seven Maruts in the time af Uttama Manu. He had a son named Vapushmān, his son was Jyotishmān. He performed penances on the banks of the Mandākini. His wife also was living with him when she was seen by seven Ṛishis in an emaciated condition. They asked her the reason of her austerity and gave her the boon that she would be the mother of seven sons. Her husband died in the course of his penances and she entered the fire with him. From the secretions of her body by the potency of the Ṛishis' words she produced seven sons.

The fourth in succession was Tāmasa Manu; his son was Dantadhvaja, who with the desire of a son offerd his seven *Dhātus* into the fire and ultimately cast his semen. After the offering of his seed into the seven flames of the fire he died and by his power seven miraculous sons were born from the fire, who made a terrific cry. Brahmā approached them and declared them to be Maruts,

In the time of Raivata Manu another host of seven Martus was born. His son was Ripujit who was childless. He propitiated the Sun God and obtained a daughter named Surati. Her father died and thereupon she wanted to end her life. The Seven Sages saw her in this condition and dissuaded her. She, however, ascended the funeral fire and since the Seven Sages had become enmoured of her, seven sons were produced from the fire. Without their mother they began to cry aud Brahmā advising them not to weep declared them to be Maruts.

The sixth Manu was Chākshusha. There was a Ṛishi named Maṅki who was performing *Tapas* in the Sapta-Sārasvata *Tīrtha* of Kurukshetra. The gods became alarmed and deputed Tushitā who tempted the Ṛishi. His semen fell in the water of the Sapta-Sārasvata. The Muni became enraged and cursed the nymph but the potency of his seed produced seven sons from the waters of the holy lake and these became the seven Maruts.

This bunch of seven stories somewhat of a purile nature is just to explain the fact that there are seven hosts of seven Maruts (*Sapta sapta hi māruto gaṇaḥ* ŚB. 9. 3. 1. 25). Their number always remains Seven, all of them are born from fire or water or both. The primeval Seven Sages, Saptarshis, somehow or the other contribute to their birth. Each time the presiding Manu of the Kalpa through his son or descendant provides the basal energy for the birth of the Seven Maruts. Each time Brahmā supervises their divine station. Moreover, it is the principle of *Rodana* that is at the root of their sublimation as Marut Gods. This etymology is the same as approved in the case of the Maruts in the Brāhmaṇas (तं प्रजापतिरब्रवीत्—कुमार किं रोदिषि, ŚB. 6. 1. 3. 9).

The principle of *Rodana* is the basic characteristic of Rudra. According to Śatapatha Br. he was called Rudra because he wept or cried (*Yadarodīt tasmād Rudraḥ*). The Madhya Prāṇa as soon as it incarnates in Matter, i.e. becomes manifest in the body, is affected by the principle of Annāda (*Aśanāya*) and desires for food. The principle of *Rodana* is the same as the principle of *Aśanāyā* or Hunger. The child cries when it becomes hungry. This is the nature of Prāṇa which is a form of Agni or Rudra and is the eater of food (*Annāda*). Agni

20

becomes desirous of food (*Anna* or *Soma*) and that is its basic distinctive feature. There can be no Agni without the principle of *Aśanāya* or hunger or the desire for food which is symbolically characterised as Rodana. It is in view of this that the Purāṇa writer is so obessed with the idea of the suggested etymology of Maruts as *Mā + Rodihi* = 'Do not weep'. In fact this points to the two aspects of Rudra, namely *Śānta* and *Ghora*. Rudra as Agni or Prāṇāgni is said to be *Śānta* or appeased when it is supplied with food or is in union with Soma, but the same becomes *Ghora* or terrific or of the nature of death when it is hungry or without food. In the latter aspect he is Bhairava making a loud tumultous cry. Each Rudra has both these aspects and there are hundreds and thousands of Rudras symbolically named as *Śata-Rudriya*. They have all to be converted into *Śānta-Rudriya*[1] i. e. the Rudras who have been appeased or pacified. This pacification becomes possible only when each of them is given a name as stated in the Śatapatha (ŚB 6.1.3.9-18). Giving a name implies the conception of Nāma and Rūpa, i e. material existence with Prāṇa and body and the food to sustain it. In each Prāṇic centre there is the existence of the seven-fold Prāṇic vibrations all of which depend on the normal functioning of the single Prāṇa with the power of food that is assimilated.

Each Manu represents the chain of the Solar power of each Kalpa. Manu himself is the principle of Mind and Prāṇa identified both with Indra and Agni and it is ultimately the emanation of his energy into heptads (*Saptaka Gaṇa*) that are symbolised as the Maruts.

The Purāṇa writer has described the seven-fold Marut gods in the time of seven Manus who represent the Forenoon of Creation. The same wheel revolves in the Afternoon or the second part of the wheel of Cosmic Time. The first part represents the Day and the second part the Night, or the first half represents the light and the second half the shadow which are called Ātapa and Chhāyā respectively. Ātapa is called Sañjā and Chhāyā is Savarṇā both of whom are said to be the two wives of Sun (*Sūrya*). The Seven sons of Sañjā represent the first host of Seven Manus and the seven sons of Savarṇā belong

(1) ते (देवाः) ऽब्रुवन् । अन्नमस्मै (रुद्राय) सम्भराम तेनैनं शमयामेति तस्मा एतदन्नं समभरञ्छान्तदेवत्यं तेनैनमशमयंस्तद्यदेतं देवमेतेनाशमयंस्तस्माच्छान्तदेवत्यं ह वै तच्छतरुद्रियमित्याचक्षते परोक्षम्, ŚB. 9. 1. 1. 2.

to the second group of Manu. Thus there are fourteen Manus in Day time and fourteen for the Night and to this are added two Manus for the Twilight (*Sandhya-kāla*), making a total of thirty Manus for the thirty Muhurtas of the Ahorātra period which symbolises the duration of one Kalpa.

Ch. 73 carries a step further the struggle between the Devas and the Asuras giving an account of the death of Kālanemi at the hands of Indra. After Indra had obtained the title of *Gotrabhid* for creating the 49 Maruts the Asura host became very much enraged when they saw Indra going out with the Maruts. It is stated that this combat took place on the Udayādri mountain. The Deva armies were commanded by Svāmi Kārttikeya Skanda and the Asuras were led by Maya. The Asura armies were pressed hard and routed by Vishṇu; then they took shelter under Kālanemi and came forward and challenged the might of Vishṇu. They turned the three worlds into a vast conflagration. Vishṇu in return covered them with an umbrella of his Nārācha arrows and then took hold of his discus with which he cut into two the mace whirled by the Asuras. In a close combat Vishṇu ultimately cut off the various limbs of Kālanemi's body and killed him.

Ch. 74 recounts an upward turn in the fortune of the Asuras who became oraganised under the leadership of Bāṇa. Vishṇu exhorted the Devas to put up a fight again and himself retired. The Devas did their best in offering resistance but did not prove equal to the Asuras and fled before them. Thereupon Bāṇa asked Bali to take charge of Indra's heaven and thus Bali installed himself on the throne of Indra. Bāṇa himself became Yama, Maya became Varuṇa, Rāhu took the place of Soma, Ketu (*Svarbhānu*) of Śūrya, Sukrāchārya of Bṛihaspati. This happened in the beginning of the fifth Kali when they replaced Indra.

When Bali was thus at the height of his power enjoying the overlordship of the ten regions of Space, he thought of his grandfather, Prahalāda, who came forthwith from the netherworld to heaven. Bali touched his feet and seated him on the throne of Indra adding that by his grace he had defeated the Devas. In great humility he offered the kingdom of heaven to Prahalāda, but the latter declined

saying that he had enjoyed the world of heaven in an earlier age and now he was devoted to the practice of Yoga :—

स्थितो बले सम्प्रति योगसाधकः (Vn. 74.28.) Thus saying Prahalāda installed Bali on the throne of Indra.

Thereupon Bali begged Prahalāda with folded hands for instructions in the duties worthy of a king :—

यन्मया तात कर्तव्यं त्रैलोक्यं परिरक्षिता।
धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेभ्यस्तदादिशतु नो भवान् ॥ (Vn. 74. 33).

Thereupon Bhāgavata Prahalāda thus expounded the Dharma :

That truly is the collection of wealth which does not conflict with Dharma and by which the future of the kingdom is made prosperous and happy. (Vn. 74. 36)

That is verily Moksha which is not in conflict with the ideals of Dharma, Artha, and Kāma and which is directed to the welfare of all beings (*Sarvasattvānugamana*) and which contributes to happiness both in this and the other world. (Vn. 74.37)

You should act in manner that you become the beloved of all and attain to fame and do not incur infamy. (Vn. 74. 38)

It is for such end that people desire abundant wealth. It is by pursuit of such a policy that the following classes of persons are inclined to be friends.

The noble-born, not addicted to vices, not fallen in evil ways and not for saken by his friends and relatives,—for such a one our wealth should be directed. It should also be given to help old men, a relative, a mendicant, a Brāhmaṇa and one otherwise celebrated. Such persons should seek refuge in your kingdom. Such should be your policy. (Vn. 74. 39-41)

King's prosperity is indicated by the earth in which Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas live, in which there are firm roots of agriculture and in which the labour element does its proper duty. (Vn. 74. 42).

A king truly attains Sānti in whose kingdom learned Brāhmaṇas themselves perform sacrifices and also make the king do so. (Vn. 74. 43).

A noble king pursuades the Brāhmaṇas to devote themselves to penances and study, sacrifices and teaching. (Vn. 74. 44).

The Kshatriyas in an ideal kingdom are devoted to Yajña, study, giving of gifts and pursuit of arms and are steadfast in the duty of protecting the kingdom. (Vn. 74. 45)

In an ideal State the Vaiśyas are devoted to Yajña, study, giving of gifts, agriculture, breeding of cattle and trade. (Vn. 74. 46)

The Śūdras in an ideal State perform their duty towards the three higher classes and obey the orders of the king. (Vn. 74. 47)

When all the four Varṇas follow their Svadharma, Dharma prospers and the king also becomes established in Dharma. Therefore the king should make the Varṇas follow their Svadharma. Since on the basis of increased Dharma the king also prospers. If Dharma declines the king also declines. (Vn. 74. 48. 49)

Bali in firm tones accepted to carry out the behest of his grandfather, Prahlāda.

This short but important inset of fourteen verses is purposeful for it portrays the ideals of a kingdom that was well governed under a king which in Sanskrit would be known as *Rājanvān Saurājya.* Its opposite was a kingless state, *Arājaka Janapada* where there was no security of life and property and the respective duties of the four Varṇas were rendered topsyturvy by an ugly selfish competition. We find in the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa verses giving a picture of an *Arājaka Rāshṭra* (Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyā Kaṇḍa 10-67, Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, 168. 1-30).

Thus king Bali devoted to the ideals of Dharma, protected his kingdom.

Ch. 75 continues with the glorification of Bali. When he initiated a reign of such piety, resembling Kṛita-yuga, Kali became alarmed and resorted to Brahmā to complain that his nature (*Svabhāva*) was nullified by Bali. Brahmā said in reply : Not only the characteristic features of your age but the nature of the whole world has been changed by the virtuous influence of king Bali :—

तं प्राह भगवान्ब्रह्मा स्वभावं जगतोऽपि हि ।
न केवलं हि भवतो हृतस्तेन बलीयसा ॥ (Vn. 75. 5)

There is no one in the three worlds who may thwart the ways of king Bali excepting Bhagavān Vishṇu. Bali because of his piety has earned for himself the earth, heaven, kingdom, wealth, glory and power. (Vn. 75. 6-8).

Thus addressed by Brahmā Kali repaired to a forest of Vibhītaka tree. Kali having withdrawn the Kṛita age became rampant in the three worlds. As a result Dharma became four-footed and the following virtues permeated the whole world :—

Tapas (penance), Ahiṁsā (non-injury), Satya (truth), Śaucha (purity), Indriya-nigraha (restraint of senses), Dayā (mercy), Dāna (gift), Ānṛiśaṁsya (compassion), Sushrūshā (service) and Yajña-karma.

Here is a statement of ten-fold Dharma (*Daśāṅga Dharma*) as parallel to the eight-fold Dharma of the Buddhists. In the kingdom of Bali, the Asura king, Kṛita Yuga was re-established and the rules of Varṇa and Āśrama began to be properly followed :—

स्वधर्मस्थायिनो वर्णाः (Vn. 75.13),

The kings considered the protection of the people as their highest duty (प्रजा पालनधर्मस्थाः सदैव मनुजर्षभाः, Vn. 75. 13).

When the observance of Dharma was carried to such perfection, Goddess *Trailokya-Lakshmī* herself approached the king of the Asuras. Bali saw the goddess Śrī of Indra's heaven appear before him. He asked as to who she was and why she had come. Goddess Padmāśrī replied, "O King Bali, listen why I have come to your presence. Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu's power is beyond comprehension. He has left Indra, and therefore I have come per force to you. He has created four types of beautiful women draped in garments of white, red, yellow and blue colours. Their unguents, garlands and other items of make-up are all of identical colours. The goddess of white appearance has *Sattva* as her quality ; that of red *Rajas* ; that of yellow *Tamas* ; and of blue appearance the composite form of the above three qualities (*Triguṇātmikā*).

स निर्ममे युवत्यस्तु चतस्रो रूपसंयुताः ।
श्वेताम्बरधरा चैव श्वेतस्रगनुलेपना ।।

श्वेतवृन्दारकारूढा सत्त्वाद्या श्वेतविग्रहा ।
रक्ताम्बरधरा चान्या रक्तस्रगनुलेपना ।।

रक्तवाजिसमारूढा रक्ताङ्गी राजसी हि सा।
पीताम्बरा पीतवर्णा पीतस्रगनुलेपना॥
सौवर्णस्यन्दनारूढा तामसं गुणमाश्रिता।
नीलाम्बरा नीलमाल्या नीलगन्धालिसप्रभा॥
नीलवृषसमारूढा त्रिगुणा सा प्रकीर्तिता।
या सा श्वेताम्बरा श्वेता सत्त्वाढ्या कुञ्जरस्थिता॥ (Vn. 75.18-22)

These four types of female energies as the archetypal goddesses conform to the four-fold manifestation of the cosmos in accordance with the ordinances of Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu. They should be understood as follows;

Goddess	*Quality*	*Colour*	*Vehicle*	*Corresponding God*	*Caste*
Sarasvatī (*Śveta Devī*)	*Sāttvikī*	White	White Elephant	Brahmā	Brāhmaṇa
Jayaśrī (*Rakta Devī*)	*Rājasī*	Red	Horse	Devarāja, Manu and his son	Kshatriya
Lakshmī (*Pīta Devī, Kanakāṅgī*)	*Tāmasī*	Yellow	*Ratha*	Śakra	Vaiśya
Priya Devī (*Nīla Devī, Nīlavarṇābhā*)	*Triguṇātmikā*	Blue or dark	Blue Bull	Daitya, Rākshasa Vidyādhara	Śūdra

These four types of goddesses are associated with four kinds of treasures (*Nidhi*) :—

1. *Sāttvikī—Mahāpadma Nidhi*–Sciences, *Itihasa-Purāṇa, Sāṅga-Veda*, 64 *Kalās*.

2. *Rājasī-Padma-Nidhi*—Jewels, gold, silver, elephants, horses, ornaments, weapons, arms, etc.

3. *Tāmasī* (Yellow)—*Mahanīla-Nidhi*, cows, buffaloes, camels, gold, gold-embroidered cloth, lands, plants, cattle, etc.

4. *Triguṇātmikā* (Blue) goddess—*Śaṅkha-Nidhi*.

The first three exist as separate goddesses with their respective treasures and possessions and glories. But they exist in a single composite form also. The Purāṇa-writer is engaged here in the exposition of *Mahā-Padminī-vidyā* as given at length in the Mārkaṇḍeya

Purāṇa (Ch. 68, see my "*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa—Eka Saṁskṛitika Adhyayana*", pp. 157-159). There the economic gradation of society is conceived of in terms of the eight *Nidhis* more or less described in similar terms with certain changes; for example. *Mahāpadma* is the treasure of a person of Sāttvika temperament who deals in gems of the highest value brought from inter-oceanic commerce and whose shops are overflowing with emaralds, rubies, and pearls, etc.

The next class is *Padma-Nidhi* belonging to a person dealing in gold, silver copper, etc. He is devoted to charities, Yajñas and construction of temples, *Maṇḍapas*. The Vāmana Purāṇa describes *Padma-Nidhi* separately as associated with arms and weapons which according to the Mārkaṇḍeya was a feature of *Makara-nidhi.* The treasure known as *Mukunda-nidhi* is associated in the Mārkaṇḍeya with dance, music and other fine arts, which in the scheme of Vāmana, is obviously to be classified under *Mahāpadma.*

The *Mahānīla-Nidhi* in Vāmana relates to cattle wealth and in the Mārkaṇḍeya to prosperity in cloth, grains, agricultural and forest produce; it appears that the two have reference to the same economic background, viz. riches associated with the Vaiśya class The *Śaṅkha-Nidhi* is described in the Mārkaṇḍeya as partly *Rājasī* but mostly of *Tamasa* character. Although its owner is the possessor of several kinds of riches yet they remain hidden and are not enjoyed by the owner.

The Vāmana Purāṇa goes a step further in making a clear statement of the temperaments, nature and donations of public endowments by owners of these four classes of Nidhis of Treasures Personified as follows :—

1. The *Mahāpadma-Nidhi*—The owners are devoted to truth and purity, and charity, and they usually organise festive functions (*Utasava·ratāḥ-Dānotsava-ratāḥ*) the last reference pointing to the great festivals of charity or wholesale gifts as known under the name of *Pañcha-Vārshika* (Divyāvadāna, Edgerton, BHS Dictionary) and *Sarvasva dakshiṇā Yajña.*

2. *Padma-Nidhi*—The owners are of beautiful form, self-respecting nature, possess costly necklaces, give profuse gifts and generally enjoy articles of comfort and luxury.

3. *Mahānīla-Nidhi*—The owners are given to ways of life in which truth and untruth are both mingled, distributing charity as also denying their patronage, sometimes devoted to just cause and at others upholding a wrong course.

4. *Śaṅkha-Nidhi*—The owners are of uncharitable and evil temperament, wanting in right faith (*Nāstika*), not having the requisite honesty (*Śaucha-rahita*), of miserly nature and denying even to themselves rightful pleasure and addicted to theft and untruthful transactions (Vn. 75. 36-49).

Goddess *Lakshmī* then explained her identity and said that she was *Rāgiṇī* goddess of red colour or *Rajoguṇī* and named *Jayaśrī* who belonged to the *Kshatriya varṇa* adding that it was her resolve to live with those were of heroic nature and avoid the persons of cowardly temperament. Since Bali was a matchless hero in the three worlds she had been attracted by her affection towards him. She said, 'Since you have won victory over Indra too by defeating him in battle, therefore, I have given you whole-hearted love. Looking at your utmost strength exceeding everyone else and your high self-conscious respect I have been drawn to you of my own accord :

दृष्ट्वा ते परमं सत्त्वं सर्वेभ्योऽपि बलाधिकम् ।
शौण्डीर्यं मानिनं वीरं ततोऽहं स्वयमागता ॥ (Vn. 75. 44-45)

Having thus spoken she entered the body of Bali and was followed by such other goddesses as *Hrī* (modesty), *Kīrti* (glory), *Prabhā* (radiance, halo), *Gati* (activity), *Kshamā* (forgiveness), *Bhūti* (wealth), *Vidyā* (knowledge), *Nīti* (morality) *Dayā* (compassion), commonsense, Veda, Śruti, Dhramaśāstra, Smṛiti, *Dhṛiti* (steadfastness), *Śānti* (peace), good action (*Kriyā*), nourishment (*Pushṭi*), contentment (*Tushṭi*) and all other qualities that appertain to *Sāttvika* nature (Vn. 75. 49-50). This is a list of moral and physical virtues of character which are termed as so many goddesses who follow in the train of *Śrī-Lakshmī*. In the Devī-Māhātmya a majority of them are said to be associated with Mahā-Devī. Similarly in a list of the goddesses in the Vishṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa these are mentioned.

Thus Mahā-Bhāgavata king Bali was the best in following *Dharma*, self-control, sacrifices, penances, truthful speech, a liberal

giver, supporter of one's dependent and their protector, established his rule in heaven and in his kingdom there remained no one who was not well-fed, well-clothed.

He was always radiant, devoted to Dharma, restrained and enjoyed riches at will :

एवंगुणोऽभूद्दनुपुंगवोऽसौ बलिर्महात्मा शुभबुद्धिरात्मवान् ।
यज्वा तपस्वी मृदुरेव सत्यवाग्दाता विभर्ता स्वजनान्त्सुगोप्ता ॥
त्रिविष्टपं शासति दानवेन्द्रे नासीत्क्षुधार्तो मलिनो न दीनः ।
सदोज्ज्वलो धर्मरतोऽथ दान्तः कामोपभोगी मनुजोऽपि जातः ॥
(Vn. 75. 51 & 52).

This important chapter is full of several object lessons. Firstly it states categorically that Prahlāda, although born in Asura race, was yet a devotee of Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu and therefore an ideal Bhāgavata in whom all the great qualities of the *Bhāgavata Dharma* found their fullest expression.

Secondly his grandson Bali who asserted his victory by defeating the Devas on the battle-field, was not only great in physical and military power but was also much greater in moral and spiritual qualities. The *Dharma* he followed was almost the same as *Ashṭāṅgika Dharma* of Buddha and the ten-fold *Sāmānya Dharma* of Manu. It is the intention of Purāṇa writer to show that these two sets of *Dharmas* were more or less the same in spirit and the fruit of following them was, in no way, different either for the Buddhists or for the Brāhmaṇas.

The Purāṇa-writer evinces special joy in delineating the high character of Bali. Although he was an Asura by race he was a perfect model of a sovereign established in laws of *Dharma* and enjoying their highest fruits. There is a hidden felicity in the exalorted style which has been followed in this account of king Bali.

The kingdom of righteousness established by an Asura king following the ideals of *Bhāgavata Dharma* contributed to the perfect peace and prosperity of the people so much, so that it was believed that Indra's heaven had been brought down on earth. This reminds of the dictum of Kālidāsa that a prosperous earthly kingdom was equal to the heaven of Indra (ऋद्धं हि राज्यं परमैन्द्रमाहुः, Raghu

2. 50). While treating of this noble theme in the realm of ideals the Purāṇa-writer had become rather objective in taking a perspective of the economic stratification of society following different pursuits of wealth in accordance with the ideals of the four Varṇas. This was the ancient *Padminī-vidyā* or the doctrine of *Śrī-Lakshmī* or of *Trailokya*. Lakshmī for which there was universal adoration amongst all people in the Gupta age. The representation of the eight or four *Nidhis* is also a favourite theme of Indian art of that period.

A special feature of the Vāmana Purāṇa can be noted here, viz. glorification of the Asura king as instructed in the *Dharma* ideals followed by the heterodox teachers, a veiled hint at Buddhism as it was being practised by even foreign rulers who were of non-Aryan affiliation. Such were the Śakas, Kushāṇas, Tushāras and Hūṇas who by virtue of their cultivating the moral and spiritual ideals were entitled to recognition as the upholders of *Dharma*.

Ch. 76 takes the account a step further in giving the story of Indra approaching Brahmā and informing him of his being vanquished at the hands of Bali and asking as to what he should do. He was advised to seek refuge in the power of Nārāyaṇa. (Vn. 76. 11) and go to a holy spot called Mahodaya. It was situated between the Himālayas in the north, Kālañjara on the south, and east of Kuśasthala and west of Vasupura :—

कालञ्जरस्योत्तरतः सुपुण्यस्तथा हिमाद्रेरपि दक्षिणस्थः ।
कुशस्थलात् पूर्वत एव विश्रुतो वसोः पुरात् पश्चिमतोऽवतस्थे ॥

(Vn. 76. 14)

King Gaya is said to have performed many Aśvamedha and Purushamedha sacrifices at that spot and therefore it was famous as Mahā-medha. After hearing this suggested location of the holy spot, Indra had a vision of Mahodaya :—

सहस्राक्षोऽपि वचनं गुरूणां संनिशम्य वै ।
प्रोवाच स्वल्पकालेन कश्चिद् दृष्टो महोदयः ॥ (Vn. 76. 12)

This is an important historical reference. Since we know that Kuśasthala was another name of Kānyakubja and the same was also known as Mahodaya (De. Geog. Dict.). It appears that after describing the Māhātmya of Sthāneśvara which was the capital of Harsha Vardhana, the Purāṇa-writer wished to record the importance of

Kānyakubja which was the capital of the Maukharies and after the death of Grahavarmā, the husband of Harsha's sister Rājyaśrī, was incorporated in the Vardhana empire. Sthāṇeśvara was a centre of Pāśupata Śaivas in the time of Prabhākara Vardhana and Harsha Vardhana and Kuśasthali Mahodaya or Kānyakubja is described here as the seat of God Vishṇu. An archæological survey of the old remains of Kannauj is likely to reveal the existence of Vishṇu temples and images at this site.

Mahodaya is said to be situated on the bank of a big river Mahānadī, which should be identified as Gaṅgā. (Vn. 76.18). Indra came to that sacred spot and began to perform Tapas to propitiate Vishṇu. After a year and half of austerities Vishṇu was pleased and gave a boon to Indra, restoring the kingdom of heaven to him. Indra took a bath in the holy river and lost his sins from which were born the Pulindas or the violent tribes of foresters occupying the track between Mahodaya, Kannauj and Kālañjara.

Indra then waited upon his mother Aditi and recited to her the account of his defeat at the hands of Bali. This made Aditi full of sorrow and she approached Vishṇu with a devout hearted. This happened in the bright half of the seventh day of Māgha (after *Makara Saṁkrānti)* which is now known as *Ratha-Saptamī* and considered sacred for Sun-worship, as invoking the Sun God riding in a chariot. This became the *Mahodaya* Day for it assered triumphant pleasure for God Indra.

Aditi praised Vishṇu with a Stotra in which epithets to both Sūrya and Vishṇu are combined. (Vn. 76. 33-35 ; *Bhāskara, Jagannātha Lakshmīpati, Jātavedas*, etc.) Here we see a synthesis of the worship of Sūrya and Vishṇu. Aditi worshipped the deity with red sandal and red flowers as are used in Sun-worship. It appears to be the day when Sūrya turned back on his Uttarāyaṇa course. We also read in the account of Yuan Chwang that Harsha first performed worship to Sūrya at Kannauj and then a great procession on the river Gaṅgā was taken to Prayāga where his five-yearly celebrations of religious worship and charity were brought to conclusion. Yuan Chwang noticed temples of all the three gods, Vishṇu, Śiva and Sūrya at Kānyakubja, which was then a centre of both Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism. Harsha's first meeting with Yuan Chwang took place at

the great festival of Kānyakubja and then from there the whole party moved to Prayāga. (R. K. Mookerji's Harsha, pp. 138-139). Harsha's father, Prabhākara Vardhana, was a great devotee of Sūrya and that tradition had continued in the family. In this picture Kānyakubja was the principal centre of Harsha's worship of the Sun-God, and it is to this event of the Solar worship at Mahodaya that the writer of Vāmana-Purāṇa had in mind.

Aditi offered ghṛita, tila and guḍa in her worship which is still the practice of Makara-Saṁkrānti celebration. As a result of her devotion God Sūrya became pleased, and appeared in visible form from out of the resplendent orb of Sūrya.

ततः प्रीतोऽभवद्भानुर्घृतार्चिः सूर्यमण्डलात् ।
विनिःसृत्याग्रतः स्थित्वा इदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ (Vn. 76. 39)

The Sun god gave a boon to Aditi that he would incarnate in her womb and would bring about the discomfort of the Asuras.

राज्यं त्वत्तनयानां वै दास्ये देवि सुरारणि ।
दानवान्ध्वंसयिष्यामि संभूयैवोदरे तव ॥ (Vn. 76. 41)

Aditi expressed the doubt that her womb had a limited capacity and would not be able to contain the cosmic form of Nārāyaṇa. Thereupon Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu promised that by his miraculous power he would be able to enter the body of Aditi and make all his energies manifest in her various parts.

This chapter is given the title of Aditi-vara-pradāna, giving of the boon to Divine Mother Aditi. After this we would naturally expect an account of the birth of Vāmana (*Vāmana-janma*) which is actually the title of Ch. 89. It is evident that the intervening 12 chapters (Chs. 77-88) are an interpolation of exotic matter not very relevent to the context as shown by their contents.

Ch. 77 starts the description in the form of Prahlāda's instructions to Bali (*Prahlādasya Bali-śikshā pradānam*). As soon as Mahānārāyaṇa in the form of a Dwarf (*Vāmana*) entered the womb of Aditi the glory of Asuras was eclipsed. Bali enquired Prahlāda the reason of it. Prahlāda entered into meditation and discovered that the diminution in the lustre of Asuras was due to the fear from Vishṇu. He began to meditate as to Vishṇu's whereabouts. In this context the Purāṇa-

writer has given a brilliant literary description of the cosmic form (*Virāṭ-rūpa*). It is stated that Prahlāda by the power of his concentrated mind had a vision of all the worlds, e. g. Seven Pātāla-lokas below the navel, seven other Lokas above the navel of the Lord, the earth as in the form of lotus, Meru in its centre as a golden mountain, on its top the eight Loka-pālas on their top the city of Brahmā (*Brahma-purī*). Under that was the hermitage of the Divine Mother Aditi. There Prahlāda was seeking the presence of Vishṇu and he found him in a Vāmana-form in her womb.

In this description several motifs are noteworthy. The first is about the Loka-Vidyā as it prevailed in the cosmographical conception in Brāhmnical mythology of the period, corresponding to which the Buddhists had their account of Loka-Nirdeśa and the Jainas of Loka-Prajñapti (for all three, see Kirfel, Cosmographie Der Inder).

Cosmic Form of Vishṇu

The second point is that the cosmic form constituted the various Lokas was a theme to which the earliest reference is found in the Ṛigveda (Purusha-Sūkta X. 90. 13-14). The third important point is that Vāmana and Vishṇu are the twin-aspect of the same Divine power which is transcendent in its universal aspect and imminent in the individual aspect. The former is Virāṭ and the latter is Vāmana :—

स हि वैष्णवो यद् वामनः ŚB. 5. 2. 5. 4.
वामनो ह विष्णुरास ŚB. 1. 2. 5. 5.
वैष्णवो वामनः ŚB. 13. 2. 2. 9.

The Dwarf becomes the Giant by the power of his Three Steps. This was in the Ṛigveda the doctrine of the Three Strides of Vishṇu (*Trivikramavidyā*) which in the Purāṇas has been given the form of a beautiful legend It is also stated that Prahlāda obtained a vision of the universal form by his Yogic power (*Yogātmā*) and afterwards he came to his normal state (*Prakṛitistha*, Vn. 77. 13). It is almost similar to what is said of Arjuna in the Gītā.

Prahlāda then disclosed to Bali that it was the mighty influence of Vishṇu which has put the Asuras' glory in shade. This enraged Bali who began to brag about the might of his individual Asura chiefs who would suffice to vanquish Hari :—

तात कोऽयं हरिर्नाम यतो नो भयमागतम् ।
सन्ति मे शतशो दैत्या वासुदेवबलाधिकाः ।। (Vn. 77. 20).

Thereupon Prahlāda rebuked Bali in the strongest term for his speaking ill of Vishṇu and he gave expression to his faith in the following words :

गुरुः पूज्यस्तत्र पिता पूज्यस्तस्याप्यहं गुरुः ।
ममापि पूज्यो भगवान्गुरुर्लोकगुरुर्हरिः ॥ (Vn. 77. 31).

This is a sample of the effective statement of the supremacy of Vishṇu as conceived by the Bhāgavata teachers in the Gupta period. It appears that the motif of Sūrya worship served as a convenient handle for vindicating the glory of Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu since the Buddhists also accepted Sūrya as the symbol of Buddha. The entire background of the schism in the camp of Asuras described here as the rift between Prahlāda and Bali, appertained to this confusion amongst the followers of Buddhism who were not averse to the worship of Sūrya although they were devoted to Buddha. Similarly the Brāhmaṇas accepted both Vishṇu and Sūrya as aspects of same divinity. To this was also added the worship of Śiva whom the Buddhists also accepted as Lokeśvara and evolved his many forms in the iconography of the period. As a matter of fact the conception of Maitreya as a close attendant of Buddha during the Gupta period both in cult wotship and iconography may be attributed to the general acceptance of Sūrya worship who was also given the name of Mitra by the foreigners who were inclined towards Buddhism. It was a very active crucible in which the worship of Śiva by the Śaivas, of Vishṇu by the Pāñcha rātra Bhāgavatas, of Sūrya by the Saurajas and of Buddha by the Buddhists met and mingled together to bring about a strange medley of cults or a higher synthesis of religious forms bringing about a cultural *reapproachment* that is exactly what we find in the 7th century India of Harsha's time.

Prahlāda in his wrath cursed Bali to loose his kingdom. But Bali addressed him with great humibility by which he became pleased and gave him a sermon to put his faith in the glory of Vishṇu. Bali accepted to do so and thereafter Prahlāda expressed desire to go on a pilgrimage to holy places.

Ch. 78 gives an account of pilgrimage of Prahlāda (*Prahlāda-tīrtha-yātrā*). His itenerary begins from the golden mountain Meru and takes the following course :—

River *Kauśikī*, *Kṛishṇā*, *Hastināpura*, *Yamunā*.

At this point Nārada interrupts the account of Tīrtha-yātrā and puts a question to Pulastya as to why Vishṇu became Trivikrama in a previous incarnation. (Vn. 78. 11).

In reply Pulastya explains the story of Trivikrama on several previous occasions. One of these relates to the story of Dhundhu who in the time of Hiraṇya Kaśipu defeated the Devas and became Indra. The account of the swelling might of Dhundhu is a rehash of the older version of history as given in the Āraṇyaka-Parva and the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa. It was the overcoming of the Asura who was the genius of the dazzards, by Kuvalayāśva who was a devotee of Vishṇu (see my book, Bhārata Sāvitrī, Vol. I, pp. 271-273, Dhundhu-māra Upākhyāna, Āraṇyaka Parva, Ch. 196). In the Vāmana, Dhundhu desirous of attaining the power of the Devas is advised to perform Yajñas and he goes to a holy spot of traditional sanctity (*Prāchīna-sthāna*) on the banks of the Devikā river (modern Deg) rising in Jasrota near Jammu and flowing into the Rāvī (Vn. 78. 37). Here he was granted for an Aśvamedha sacrifice by Bhārgava priest. In the earlier story Dhundhu was an Asura having the form of wild horse but now he gives demonstration of his power in the form of the free-roaming horse of sacrifice. God Vishṇu assumed the form of Vāmana on the banks of Devikā to curb the pride of Dhundhu. He was seen by the priests as being drowned in the waters of the Devikā river when they rushed from the place of the sacrifice to save his life. After his rescue he made a request from Dhundhu for three steps of earth :

मम प्रमाणमालोक्य मामकं च पदत्रयम् ।
स्वं प्रयच्छस्व दैत्येन्द्र एतदेवार्थये ह्यहम् ॥ (Vn., 78. 79)

and that being granted he brought about the fall and destruction of the Asura.

This short inset of second account of Trivikrama brings into relief the sacred character of the Devikā river in the Punjab which is extolled elsewhere in the Vāmana and is made the scene of some sacred Vishṇu shrines. We find in the Matsya-Purāṇa an account of the visit of king Purūravā whose capital was at Śākala in the Madra country, visiting the source of the Rāvī in Kāṅgrā and there seeing a temple of Vishṇu reclying on serpent Śesha and after offering worship to the God he recited his thousand names (Matsya, Chs. 115 ; see my Matsya Purāṇa—A Study, pp: 199-220 ; 115-119,).

ततो धुन्धुर्देविकायां प्राचीने पापनाशने।
भार्गवेन्द्रेण शुक्रेण वाजिमेधाय दीक्षितः॥ (Vn. 78. 37)

As I have pointed out there the two accounts in the Matsya and in Vāmana are based on the penetration of the *Pāñcha-rātra Bhāgavata* religion in the remote and secluded parts of Himālayas formed by the three valleys of the Rāvī, Chandra-Bhāgā rivers.

Ch. 79 gives the story of king Purūravas' going from Śākala in Madra country to thei nterior of the Himālaya and there having a Darśana of Vishṇu as a prologue to it; and is mentioned his visit to several other Tīrthas as Kālindī, Liṅgabheda giri, Kedāra-tīrtha, Kubjāmra (Kanakhala), Badarikāśrama, Sarasvatī, Vārāha-tīrtha, Bhadrakarṇa, Vipāśā (Vyas), where he saw God Vishṇu and Irāvatī. At this point Nārada asked as to how Purūravas in the Tretā age obtained a beautiful form. In reply to this we are treated to a rather common place, and unedifying story of a Vaiśya of Śākala who on his journey to Saurāshṭra was robbed in the Rājasthāna deserts and there met the chief of the Pretas for whom he performed a pilgrimage to Gayā. It is a Māhātmya of the Śrāvaṇa-Dvādaśī-Vrata and almost as a personal reminiscence of the Purāṇa-writer has been crudely inserted with the exalted name of Purūravas. It is stated that the merchant after taking two more birth in a Vaiśya family became a Kshatriya and then was born as king Purūravas of the Madra-country. He had an ugly appearance which he got rid of by worshipping God Vishṇu in the Himālaya on the banks of Irāvatī, and by observing the *Nakshatra Purusha-Vrata* and the *Vāmana-Dvādaśī-Vrata*. The latter vow is described in the Matsya and it seems that the author of the Vāmana is here entangled in the mesh of smaller Vratas, and gives in some detail the *Nakshatra-Purusha-Vrata* in Ch. 80. It is a cosmic conception of divine form in terms of the galaxies of twenty eight constellations known to astronomers.

नक्षत्राङ्गानि देवस्य यानि यानीह नारद॥ (Vn. 80. 2)

It appears that the austere discipline of regulating dietary habits and life for a full year as prescribed in this vow contributed to the regaining of health and beautiful form. This vow was associated with the name of Ṛishi Bhṛigu who had performed it with good effect.

अङ्गोपाङ्गानि देवर्षे पूजनीयानि वै प्रभोः।
सुरूपाण्यभिजायन्ते प्रत्यङ्गाङ्गानि चैव हि॥ (Vn. 80. 31)

सर्वाणि भद्राण्याप्नोति शरीरारोग्यमुत्तमम् ।
अनन्तां मनसः प्रीतिं रूपं चातीव शोभनम् ॥ (Vn. 80. 33)
वाङ्माधुर्यं तथा कान्तिं यच्चान्यदभिवाञ्छितम् ।
ददाति नक्षत्रपुमान्पूजितस्तु जनार्दनः ॥ (Vn. 80. 34)

The main emphasis in the observance of this *Vrata* is on a regulated course of fasting which had conferred beauty, progeny, voice, culture, fame on many a person including Arundhatī, Aditi, Rambhā, Tilottamā and lastly king Purūravas.

Ch. 81 takes up the clue again with the Tīrthayātrā of Prahlāda who having paid a visit to the shrine of Vishṇu on the Irāvatī, came back to Kurukshetra (Vn. 81. 1-2), and took his bath in Chakra-tīrtha there. Thereafter he undertook a course of pilgrimage to the following places, Devikā, Gokarṇa, Kāmeśvara, Puṇḍarīka, Krishṇa-tīrtha, Haṁsa-pada, Payoshṇī, Vitastā, Kapilā, Maṇimanta and Madhu-nādinī (a small river of Kurukshetra).

Then is given the story of the death of Jalodbhava, an Asura who was slain by Vishṇu (Vn. 81. 28), on the confluence of the Vitastā and Himavatī rivers. It appears that the legend had a local association describing the seasonal floods of the Vitastā river by brusting of the glacial waters in the beginning of the summer season, and the same has been personified under the name of Jalodbhava Asura.

Ch. 82 seems to be a Pāśupata patch giving an account of the conferring of the Chakra weapon by Śiva to Vishṇu. The *Sudarśana Chakra* is described as similar to *Kāla-chakra* or Time-Wheel :—

ततः प्रीतः प्रभुः प्रादाद्विष्णवे परमं पदम् ।
प्रत्यक्षतेजसा युक्तं दिव्यं चक्रं सुदर्शनम् ॥
कालचक्रनिभं चक्रं शंकरो विष्णुमब्रवीत् ॥ (Vn. 82. 23-24)

The Sudarśana Chakra is said to be of twelve spokes (*Dvādaśāra*, RV. I. 164. 11) and six naves (*Shaṇṇābhi*) which are the six seasons :—

आरासंस्थास्त्वमी तत्र देवा मासाश्च राशयः ।
शिष्टानां रक्षणार्थाय संस्थिता ऋतवश्च षट् ॥ (Vn. 82. 26).

The twelve spokes are represented by twelve gods, viz., Agni, Soma, Mitra, Varuṇa, Śachīpati (*Indra*), Indrāgni, Vāyu, Viśvedeva, Prajāpati, Dhanvantari. The 12 months Chaitra to Phālguna are

supported on this great wheel of Vishṇu. This confirms the Vedic symbolism of the Time Wheel (*Kāla-chakra*) being the same (*Sudarśana Chakra*) or Vishṇu. Śiva explains the irresistible nature of Sudarśana. In order to verify that Vishṇu whirls the Chakra against Śiva who is by its potency split into three parts as Rudra (*Viśveśa*), Vishṇu, (*Yajñeśa*) and Brahmā (*Yajña-yājaka*). Śiva then explains that this trinitarian pattern is one of his aspects, he himself remaining beyond this trinity.

प्राकृतोऽयं महाभाग विकारो ब्रह्मणो मम ।
निकृत्तो न स्वभावो मे अच्छेद्यो दाह्य एव हि ॥

(Vn. 82. 38).

तदेतानीह चक्रेण त्रीण्यङ्गानीह केशव ।
कृत्तानि तानि पुण्यानि भविष्यन्ति न संशयः ॥

(Vn. 82. 39).

Śiva speaks of his trinitarian form under the names of Hiraṇyāksha (*Brahmā*), Suvarṇāksha (*Vishṇu*) and Viśva-rūpāksha (*Śiva*) (Vn. 82. 40). Vishṇu was then persuaded by Śiva to slay the Asura named Śrīdāmā who had been the cause of wide spread distress to the world.

Ch. 83 continues the account of Prahlāda's Tīrtha-yātrā to the Naimishāraṇya situated on the three rivers, Gomatī, Kāñchanākshī and Śubhadā. (Vn. 83. 2). The geographical pattern of the pilgrimage in Ch. 83 is of a meteoric nature darting abruptly from one point to another and in all directions without any consideration of geographical contiguity or congruity. It is conceived on the assumption that Prahlāda, king of the Asuras, possessed the power of magical movement at will. It also reflects the mentality in which a devotee thought of the whole country at one and the same time and built a mental vision of the holy land fixing his gaze from point to point in quick succession so that the whole land was opitomised in one single picture, i. e. how representative centres like Vārāṇasī, Mathurā and Prayāga were planned after the geographical model of all the holy places being represented there in a limited area.

From Naimisha where Prahlāda worshipped God Vishṇu, he went to Gayā and offered worship to the manes, from there came back to Sarayū and took a bath at the Gopratāra-tīrtha (modern Guptāra-ghāṭa). Thereafter he fled to Purushottama-

kshetra at Jagannātha Purī and then to Mahendra mountain in the eastern ghats offering worship to *Ardha-nārīśvara-Śiva.* From there he rushes to Soma-tīrtha in the extreme west (Prabhāsa pattan in Saurāshtra), and from there to Sahyādrika, western ghats; from there to Pāriyātra (Arāvalī in Rājasthāna), from there to Lāṅgalinī (river Langalia in Orissa), from there to Kaśeru Deśa and unknown centres of Śiva: from there to the river Maṅkaraṇikā (unknown but probably the same place in Kurukshetra where Ṛishi Maṅkaṇa had performed Tapas). Then he visited in meteoric succession the Malaya mountain, Vindhya mountain, Vipāśā river, Avantī and Kshiprā offering worship to both Śiva and Mahā-Kāla; then to the Nishadha-country (Gwalior region); then Mahodaya (Kannauj) where he worshipped Hayagrīva; then to Aśva-tīrtha on the Gaṅgā in Pāñchāla; from there Prayāga where in the month of Māgha he paid homage to Akshayavaṭa; from there he went to Vārāṇasī worshipping Avimukteśvara and Lolārka; then to Madhuvana (Mathurā) and then to Pushkarāraṇya (Pokharan region in Rājasthāna). This pilgrimage is said to have been prescribed by Ṛishi Agastya.

प्रोक्तं त्वगस्त्येन महर्षिणा च । (Vn. 83. 33)

The *phala-stuti* indicates that it was incorporated into the text of the Vāmana as a short floating treatise from somewhere else.

Ch. 84 is organised in similar style which opens with a Tīrtha-yātrā sector in the Punjab and Kurukshetra mentioning the visit of several Ṛishis at the invitation of Bhārgava Śukra to Kuru-Jāṅgala, Śatadru, river Kiraṇa, Vegavatī, Īśvarī, Devikā, Payoshṇī, Subhānavī, Pushkarāksham yogandhi and returning to Sarasvatī. Here the Ṛishis paid worship to Rudrakoṭi Śiva at Koti-tīrtha. It seems that a big fair was held here to which pilgrims from Naimisha, Magadha, Sindhu Deśa, Dharmāraṇya, Pushkara, Daṇḍkāraṇya, Champā (Aṅga Janapada Bhagalpur) Tārakachha and Devikā folked, together for worshipping Śiva.

कोटितीर्थे रुद्रकोटिं ददर्श वृषभध्वजम् ।
नैमिषेया द्विजवरा मागधेयाः ससैन्धवाः ॥
धर्मारण्याः पुष्करेया दण्डकारण्यकास्तथा ।
चाम्पेयास्तारकच्छेया देविकातीर्थकाश्च ये ॥ (Vn. 84. 11-12)

The mention of these eight different centres seems to be purposeful as indicating the seats of the Pāśupata teachers in various parts

of the country from where they thronged to Kurukshetra to have a bath in the Sarasvatī at the time of some great celebrations like the Solar Eclipse. From Koṭi-tīrtha the party went to Kuru-Jāṅgala then to Sthāṇu Tīrtha on the Sarasvatī, then Daśāśvamedha, Soma-tīrtha, Kshīrikāvāsa, Kurudhvaja, Padmākshī Nagarī, Kumāradhārā, Kapila-dhārā, Narmadā and from there straightway to the Himālayas where the two deities Vāraha Svāmin and Kokāmukha Svāmin were worshipped :—

जगाम भूधरं द्रष्टुं वाराहं चक्रधारिणम् ।
स्नात्वा कोकामुखे तीर्थे संपूज्य धरणीधरम् ।। (Vn. 84. 25-26).

These two Tīrthas famous in the Gupta period being mentioned in the Copper plate inscriptions. They were situated on the sacred confluence of the rivers, Tāmrā, Aruṇā with Kauśikī. From there the pilgrims came to Kāliñjara and then to Prabhāsatīrtha on the sea-shore where God Śiva was worshipped, being situated at the confluence of the Sarasvatī with the western ocean in Saurāshṭra. The name of the deity was Someśvara. From there he went to worship Mahālaya which is identified with Oṁkāra Māndhatā on the Narmadā. Having worshipped God Rudra there the pilgrims went to Uttara Kuru which appears to be just a formal reference without realising the geographical interation of the location of Uttara Kuru in Central Asia which was an ancient geographical place-name signifying one of the seven Dvīpas. From this distant place the next point to be reached is Sapta-Godāvara Tīrtha on the mouth of the Godāvarī river which shows the extreme inconsistency in the geographical planning of this particular Tīrtha-yātrā. The other names after this are Dāru-vana in the Himālayas, river Brāhmaṇī in Orissa, Plakshāvataraṇa at the source of the Sarasvatī, Kuṇḍina, Śūrpāraka (modern Supara on the sea-coast), Māgadhāraṇya the river Śoṇa, Mahā Kauśikī, Saindhavāraṇya, Kanakhala, Girivraja (Modern Rājgīra) Kāmarūpa, Pravara-tīrtha, Trikūṭa, Daṇḍaka-vana. Reference is here made to a big tree with numerous branches having divine splendour which can only be the great Banian tree with thousand branches on the bank of the Narmadā :—

तत्र दिव्यं महाशाखं वनस्पतिवपुर्धरम् ।
ददर्श पुण्डरीकाक्षं महाश्वापदवारणम् ।। (Vn. 84. 44).

The Prahlāda spent three nights sleeping on hard ground and reciting a stotra to Sarasvatī.

In the next four Adhyāyas 85-88 are given a bunch of four Stotras, viz. Gajendramoksha Stotra (Ch. 85). The scene is placed on the Trikūṭa hill in the midst of ocean. A vivid inset describing the beauty of the mountain, ponds and forest is given (Vn. 85. 4-28). An elephant king came to slake his thirst in the waters of the pond but was caught there by an alligator. Each pulled with his strength and were locked in a mortal combat for a thousand years. Then the elephant reduced to great strate, thought of the divine *Hari* in his mind and recited a Stotra (Vn. 85. 22-60) comprised of about 200 epithets of the most brilliant description invoking the names, qualities, attributes, Līlās of Mahā Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu as invoked by the Bhāgavata devotees of the Gupta period. There is also the well-known Gajendramoksha Stotra in the Bhāgavata (8.3.2-33), which is replete with Vedic motifs and conceived in more exhorted strain and literary style of greater perfection. The king of elephants was rescued by the grace of Vishṇu. It is an allegorical description in which the elephant symbolises the principle of Ahaṅkāra, egoistic consciousness and the alligator represents the bonds of the worlds from which redemption comes only when the grace of Divine Vishṇu comes to the aspiring soul.

Ch. 86 is a Stotra to Sarasvatī but preceded by a *Rakshā-pañjara* or *Rakshā-kavacha* to Vishṇu recited by a Yogāchārya teacher which has reference to a Bhāgavata, who was the follower of the Yoga doctrine. It is a high-flown Stotra recited first by Sarasvatī and then by her grace by a Brāhmanical student in which a large number of epithets appearing before him in true Bhāgavata inspiration are addressed to Vishṇu (Vn. 86. 67-104). Its higher purpose is to show that Brāhmanical learning was inspired by traditional devotion to such ancient gods, deities as Agni, Sarasvatī and Vishṇu. It is called a Sārasvata Stotra for the invocation of Vishṇu consisting of 108 epithets.

Ch. 87 is a Stotra of incomparable charm and power recited by Śiva to Vishṇu in Vārāṇasī (Vn. 87. 48). It is called *Pāpa-praśamana-Stava*, i. e. Divine invocation for wiping of sin. It is difficult to conceive of a Bhāgavata intellectual and academic endeavour for the glorification of Vishṇu, in terms of a long string of ideas, pulled from Vedic and Purāṇic sources. Its fluency and beauty of style are a rare treat and it is amazing how the Vedic tradition of cosmogonical

significance was completely mastered by the Bhāgavatas and how naturally it was assimilated by them for restating the Pāñcha-Rātra Vaishṇava faith both in terms of its philosophical and cult background. It includes over 200 epithets (Vn. 87. 1. 47). It is extremely gratifying to think that this Stotra is placed in the mouth of Śiva in the sacred city of Vārāṇasī where in the midst of its Śaiva atmosphere such an exhorted and inspired invocation of Vishṇu has been formulated. There can be no greater proof of the harmony between Vaishṇava and Śaivas than this Tripurāri Stotra of Keśava.

In chapter 88 a second *Pāpa-praśamana-Stava* recited by Ṛishi Agastya to Vishṇu with a sprinkling of epithets intended for Śiva like the previous Vishṇu Stotra. It is organised as a Namaḥ invokation. It may be stated that in accordance with the style and inspiration of the Śata-Rudriya Stotra of the Yajurveda (Book. XVI.) there was an ardent desire in the heart of Bhāgavata devotee to compose for Vishṇu also a Stotra of the same psychological intensity and we find several instances of such literary endeavour amongst which the Stotra in Ch. 87 is an ideal specimen. The Stotra in Ch. 88 is also a Namaḥ Stotra but does not soar so high as the preceding one. This is a *Namaḥ Śatika Stotra.*

Ch. 89 begins with the same 9 Ślokas as in Ch. 84 showing through an accepted technique that the intervening material of chapters 85-88 comprised of four Stotras was clearly interpolated. Again the whole material after chapters 76 which was entitled *'Aditi-Vara-pradāna* was also foreign to its present context and somehow grafted on it. This is shown by the identity of the theme in chapters 76 and 89 relating to the story of Aditi and the birth of Vāmana from her womb. After the other Munis, invited by Śukra, had departed, Śukrāchārya invited all the Bhārgava Sages to a great Yajña in which Bali was initiated with his wife Vindhyāvalī (Vn. 89. 31). The white horse was let loose and after 3 months Aditi, mother of the gods, gave birth to Vāmana. Immediately Brahmā with great Ṛishis waited upon him and recited a Stotra (Vn. 89. 36-41). Vishṇu requested Brahmā to perform his sacred thread ceremony which the latter did according to the Vedic rites. Ṛishi Pulaha offered the Yajñopavīta, Pulastya white garments, Agastya dear-skin, Bhāradvāja, the girdle, Marīchi the staff of Palāśa wood, Vāruṇi the Aksha-sūtra, Aṅgiras the Kuśa garment, Indra a Chhatra, Bhṛigu pair of sandals, and Bṛihaspati a

Kamaṇḍalu. He studied the Vedas with their six Aṅgas together with the Sāma Veda and the great legends (*Mahadākhyāna*) as well as the Gandharva Veda. In one month's time he mastered the Ocean of Vedic knowledge and also became an adapt in the Veda of the worlds :—

मासेनैकेन भगवाञ्ज्ञातश्रुतिमहार्णवः ।
लोकाचारप्रवृत्त्यर्थमभूत्स तु विशारदः ॥ (Vn. 89. 50)

Then Vāmana requested Bhāradvāja for permission to go to the Aśvamedha sacrifice of Bali at Kurukshetra. In a short inset the cosmic form of Vāmana is described with some flourish. (Vn. 89. 56-58).

In chapter 90 we find a list of places of Vaishṇava affiliation which were centres of Bhāgavata worship and are described here as sacred to Vāmana. These are more or less of the nature of *Vishṇu Piṭhas* listed in verses 1-44. They are as follows :—

१. मानसह्रद—मत्स्य
२. कौशिकी—कूर्म
३. कृष्णा—हयग्रीव
४. हस्तिनापुर—गोविन्द
५. कालिन्दी—त्रिविक्रम
६. केदार—भव
७. कुब्जाम्र—माधव
(कनखल)
८. बदरी—नारायण
९. वाराहतीर्थ—गरुडध्वज
१०. भद्रकर्ण—जयेश
११. विपाशा—द्विजप्रिय
१२. इरावती—रूपधार
१३. कुरुक्षेत्र—कुरुध्वज
१४. कृतशौच—नरसिंह
१५. गोकर्ण—विश्वधारण
१६. प्राचीन—कामपाल
१७. महाम्भस्—पुण्डरीक
१८. विशाखयूप—अजित
१९. हंसपद—हंस
२०. पयोष्णि—यमखण्ड
२१. वितस्ता—कुमारिल
२२. मणिमती—शम्भु
२३. ब्रह्मण्य—प्रजापति
२४. मधुनदी—चक्रधर
२५. हिमाचल—शूलबाहु
२६. औषधसानु—विष्णु
२७. भृगुतुङ्ग—सुवर्ण
२८. नैमिष—पीतवासस्
२९. गया—गोपति
३०. दक्षिणगिरि—अर्धनारीश्वर
३१. उत्तर—गोपाल
३२. महेन्द्र—सोमपीठ
३३. सह्याद्रि—वैकुण्ठ
३४. पारियात्र—अपराजित
३५. कशेरुदेश—विश्वरूप
३६ मलयाद्रि—सौगन्धि
३७. विन्ध्यपाद—सदाशिव
३८. अवन्तिविषय—धिष्ण्य
३९. निषध—अमरेश्वर
४०. पाञ्चाल—पाञ्चालिक
४१. महोदय—हयग्रीव

४२. प्रयाग—योगशायी
४३. मधुवन—स्वयंभू
४४. अब्जगन्ध—पुष्कर
४५. वाराणसी—केशव
४६. पम्पा—पद्मकिरण
४७ समुद्र—वडवामुख
४८. कुमारधार—बाह्लीश
४९. बर्हण—कार्त्तिकेय
५०. ओजस—शंभु
५१. कुरुजाङ्गल—स्थाणु
५२. किष्किन्धा—वनमाली
५३. नर्मदा—श्रीपति
५४. माहिष्मती—त्रिणयन
५५. अर्बुद—त्रिसौपर्ण
५६. सूकराचल—द्माधर
५७. प्रभास—त्रिणाचिकेत
५८. उदय—शशि, सूर्य, ध्रुव
५९. हेमकूट—हिरण्याक्ष
६०. शरवण—स्कन्द
६१. महालय—रुद्र
६२. उत्तरकुरु—पद्मनाभ
६३. सप्तगोदावर—हाटकेश्वर
६४. प्रयाग—महेश्वर
६५. शोण—रुक्मकवच
६६. कुण्डिन—घ्राणतर्पण
६७. भिल्लीवन—महायोग
६८. प्लक्षावतरण—श्रीनिवास
६९. सूर्यारक—चतुर्बाहु
७०. मगधा—सुधापति
७१. गिरिव्रज—पशुपति
७२. यमुनातट—श्रीकण्ठ
७३. दण्डकारण्य—वनस्पति
७४. कालिञ्जर—नीलकण्ठ
७५. सरयू—अनुत्तम
७६. महाकोशी—हंसयुक्त
७७. दक्षिण गोकर्ण—शर्व
७८. प्रजामुख—वासुदेव
७९. विन्ध्यश्रृङ्ग—महागौर
८०. कन्था—मधुसूदन
८१. त्रिकूटशिखर—चक्रपाणि
८२. लोहदण्ड—हृषीकेश
८३. कौशला—महोदय
८४. सुराष्ट्र—महावास
८५. नवराष्ट्र—यशोधर
८६ देविकानदी—भूधर
८७ विदेहा - कुशप्रिय
८८. गोमती—छादितगद
८९. शंखोद्धार—शंखी
९०. सैन्धवारण्य—सुनेत्र
९१. शूरपुर—शूर
९२. हिरण्वती—रुद्र
९३. त्रिविष्टप—वीरभद्र
९४. शङ्कुकर्ण—नीलाभ
९५. शालवन—भीम
९६. घटित—विश्वामित्र
९७. कैलास—वृषभध्वज
९८. महिलाशैल—महेश
९९. वलभी—गोमित्र
१००. सिंहलद्वीप—उपेन्द्र
१०१. शक्र—कुन्दमाली
१०२. रसाल—सहस्रशिरस्, कालाग्नि, कपिल, कृत्तिवासस्
१०३. सुतल—कूर्म
१०४. वितल—पङ्कजानन
१०५. महातल—वृषलेश्वर
१०६. तल—सहस्रचरण, सहस्रभुज
१०७. पाताल—हरिशंकर
१०८. धरातल—कोकनद
१०९. मेदिनी—चक्रपाणिन्
११०. भुवर्लोक—गरुड
१११. स्वर्लोक—विष्णु

११२. महर्लोक—अगस्त्य
११३. जन—कपिल
११४. तपोलोक—वाङ्मय
११५. ब्रह्मलोक—ब्रह्मा
११६. शैव—सनातन
११७. वैष्णव—परब्रह्म
११८. निरालम्ब—अप्रतर्क्य
११९. निराकारे—तपोमय
१२०. जम्बूद्वीप—चतुर्बाहु
१२१. कुशद्वीप—कुशेशय
१२२. प्लक्षद्वीप—गरुडवाहन
१२३. क्रौञ्चद्वीप—पद्मनाभ
१२४. शाल्मल—वृषभध्वज
१२५. शाक—सहस्राक्ष
१२६. पुष्कर - वामन
१२७. शालिग्राम—स्वयंश्रीभगवान्

While going through this list of Vishṇu-Pīṭhas we are reminded of the very imposing list of Yakshas as given in the Buddhist text of Mahā Māyūrī (Sylvan Levi's French Paper : An article in *Journal Asiatique* 1915 and my English translation of it, *JUPHS* (1942, Vol. XV, PP. 24-52) and the list of Devī-Pīṭhas.

We discover a definite technique in the compilation of such lists and it was the idea of apotheosising the Motherland and giving her the status of a divinity in terms of the various deities that were worshipped by the followers of different faiths. These holy places of Vishṇu are designated here as *Mahālaya* (Vn. 90. 46-47) and are put in the mouth of Vāmana himself who recommends that these ancient centres should be recited (*saṅkīrtanīya*), visited and the respective deities should be worshipped (*devatā sandarśan*).

In Chapter 91, Vāmana is described to go to the Kurujāṅgala country where King Bali was celebrating his Yajña. It is stated that at the approach of Vāmana, the very genius of Yajña fell into consternation at the idea that Śiva had once brought disruption to it and what was now going to happen at the hands of Vishṇu (Vn. 91.2). Even the Fires were not accepting the offerings made by the Asuras. These terrific signs made Bali nervous who asked the reason from his teacher, Śukra, "Revered Sir, tell me why the oceans are agitated ? Why the constellations have stopped their movement ? Why the quarters of space are enveloped in darkness ? Who has incurred sin to cause these calamities ?" Śukra pointed out that the reason of those cosmic consternations was the approach of God Vishṇu whom neither the earth nor the mountains, neither the heavens nor the ocean could withstand. Since the Great Lord was moving, everything else supported by him had been thrown into confusion :

तदङ्घ्रिविक्षेपमपारयन्ती मही सशैला चलिता दिशश्च ।
तस्यां वलन्त्यां मकरालयाश्च तद्वृत्तवेला दितिजाद्य जाता ॥

(Vn. 91. 9.)

Hearing this Bali asked his teacher as to his duty when Vishṇu came to his Yajña. Śukra was placed in a difficult stituation, since he was to satisfy the interests of Bali and carry out the mission of Nārāyaṇa. He frankly told Bali that the Asura King had caused the sacrificial offerings to go to the Asuras in place of the Devas as ordained by the Vedas and it was to restore this arrangement that divine Vishṇu was coming to his Yajña.

त्वया कृता यज्ञभुजोऽसुरेन्द्रा बहिष्कृता ये श्रुतिदृष्टमार्गाः ।
श्रुतिः प्रमाणं मखभागभाजिनः सुरास्तदर्थं हरिरभ्युपैति ॥ (Vn. 91. 13)

But he also warned Bali not to make any promise of land, gold, etc., or even a blade of grass, and should simply dismiss Vāmana by soft words saying that he was the Master of the Three Worlds and so nothing remained to be offered to him. This exortation of his teacher made Bali fall back upon his true character and he promptly asked, much less to Nārāyaṇa (जनार्दने लोकपतौ महर्षे समागते नास्ति कथं नु वच्मि । Vn. 91. 17). Bali insisted that the giving of gifts had been a trait of his character earned in previous lives and so he could not go against it. It was a higher level upto his point. Thereafter there is one of the crudest patches conceivable to illustrate the belief about the predominent influence of habits undergone in previous lives by means of a story put in the mouth of Bali. Brāhmaṇa young man of the Malaya country, in spite of all his learning and the training, had been a victim of the worst passion and continued his debauchery in four successive lives, as a tiger, white donkey, parrot and bull, on account of his *pūrvābhyāsa* (Vn. 91. 19-112). While speaking about Bali's supreme ideal, that the Purāṇa-writer should have descended to the low level of recording a folk-story of such human depravity, is astonishing. It appears that this was a flamboyant interpolation in which the structure of the tale is built on the lines of medieval Jaina stories in which the fruit of action is depicted as pursuing an individual through several lives and the main motif is that of incurable lust. In the midst of an exalted theme as the character of Bali, such purileabsurdity is intolerable.

Chapter 92 continues the story of Vāmana coming to the sacrifice of Bali, being greated by the Asura King and asking for three step-measures of earth and as soon as the request was granted, transforming himself as the Virāṭ Trivikrama.

Then follows a brilliant description of the Cosmic Form : "Earth is your feet, heaven the legs, *Satya* and *Tapas* the two knee-caps, Meru and Mandara, your thighs, *Viśvedevāḥ* your hips, the Marut gods your pelvis, god of love, the organ, Prajāpati the scrotum, the oceans the belly, the seven worlds your digestive system, Yajña is the Fire in your stomach, the rivers in the triple folds of skin (*trivali*), *Ishṭāpūrta* and other rituals are the several elements of your structure, the Vasu gods are your back-bone, the Rudras are your shoulders, the regions of space your arms, the eight Vasus your hands, Brahmā, Prajāpati the heart, thunderbolt the bony structure of the heart, a thousand Śrī goddesses the chest, Moon as your mind, Aditi the Mother of Gods the neck, the priests-holding fires the mouth, all the sacrements the lips, where may also be seen all the Śāstras and the four Purushārthas of *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Moksha*, Lakshmī the forehead, the two Aśvins the two ears, Mātariśvā the breath, all the Maruts the joints, the sūktas your teeth, Goddess Sarasvatī the tongue, Sun and Moon the eyes, Kṛittikā and other stars the eye-lids, Viśākhā, middle of the eye-brows, the constellations the hair-follicles, the Maharshis the hair, (Vn. 92-18-27)". By the power of his three *guṇas*, the Lord who creates the Bhūtas become This All (गुणैः सर्वमयो भूत्वा भगवान् भूतभावनः, Vn. 92.28). The Purāṇa writers view with each other in giving one or more descriptions of the *Virāṭ Rūpa* which had been handed down from the Purusha Sūkta and this became a hall-mark of the Bhāgavata conception of Vishṇu in his various incarnations, amongst them the present description is bound to occupy a high rank.

The story is continued that having measured all the worlds in his two steps, Vāmana insisted on having the third one also, failing which he would put Bali in bondage. To this Bali's spirited son, Bāṇāsura vehemently protested but Vāmana replied that his father Bali should have realised the implications of granting him Three Steps and addressed himself to Bali : "O King of the Daityas, you will go to reside in the Sutala region of *Pātāla* and there enjoy all the glories of your kingdom. There people will organise a great

festival named after you and generally described as the Offering of Lamps (*Dīpa pradāna*) in which worship will be offered to you by means of flowers and lights. It will be *Kaumudī Mahotsava,* performed sometime after the *Indra Dhvaja* festival. (Vn. 92. 56-58).

This is a Very important reference which only a writer who had intimate knowledge of the south Indian festivals, called *OṆAM* in the Kerala country could think of. It is in clear terms a reference to the Bali festival celebrated in the form of *OṆAM,* accompanied by much *eclat,* burning of lights and offering of flowers and pūjā and *Kathakali* dance-drama enacting the glories of Mahā Bali and Trivikrama and singing songs of praise for the Asura King.

Chapter 93, stating how the Devas complemented Vishṇu for his Tṛivikrama Deed, gives us a very extra-ordinary prose *Stotra* recited by Brahmā in glorification of Vāmana Vishṇu, beginning: 'OM Namaste Devādhideva, Vāsudeva, Ekaśṛiṅga, etc......' Some of its Vedic and other significant epithets are: Vṛishākapi, Kapila, Vishvaksena, Vaikuṇṭha, Vareṇya, Aparājita, Jayanta, Mahā Deva, Pṛithusravas, Pṛishṇigarbha, Hiraṇyagrbha, Bhutādhivasa, Arshtisheṇa, Parishtuta, Mahā Kalpa, Sarvātmaka, Somātmaka, Sanātana, Muñjakeśa, Ketumān, Haṁsa, Kuśeśaya, Vāmana, Sahasra Śīrsha, Sahsradṛik, Sahasra pāda, Mahā Purusha, Sahasra Bāhu, Sahasra Mūrti, Viśvarūpa, Mūrta, Amūrta, Viśvātmā, Paramā, Oṁkāra, Vashaṭkāra, Svāhākāra, Mātariśva, Yajñāchara, Trika, Hotā, Homa, Hūyamāna, Agni, Viśvadhāma, Paramadhāma, Sṛugabhaṇda, Araṇi, Yajña, Udhgātha, Yajamāna, Yoga, Moksha, Dhāta, Soma, Sūrya, Dakshiṇā, Dīkshita, Nara, Tṛinayana, Śuchi, Śukra, Nabha, Nabhasya, Saha, Sahasya, Tapasya, Tapa, Madhu, Mādhava, Kāla, Vikrama Aśvagrīva, Mahā Medha, Sattva, Brahmachārin, Svāhā, Mitrā-Varuṇa, Mahā Bhūta, Ūrdhvakarma, Tṛivikrama. (Vn. 93. 9).

Vishṇu became propitiated and asked Brahmā to choose a boon. Brahmā requested that he should stay in his *Svayambhū* abode in the form of a Vāmana, to which Vishṇu agreed :—

इत्थं वृते तेन वरे वरेण्ये देवोऽप्यथाचिन्तितमव्ययात्मा ।
तस्थौ स्वरूपेण हि वामनेन संपूज्यमानः सदने स्वयंभोः ॥ (Vn. 93.11.)

He who was of a thousand *yojana* measures in heaven converted himself into a Vāmana form—

स्वर्गे सहस्रं स तु योजनानां विष्णुः प्रमाणेन हि वामनोऽभूत् । (Vn. 93.14.)

This is an important statement throwing light on the inner meaning of *Vāmana* and *Virāṭ*. In his *Avyakta Svayambhū* form, the self-existent Creater is Vāmana, the Dwarf, who is beyond the categories of time and space and has no dimensions. He is the same as the Unborn, *Aja*, also called *Avyaya Purusha*, having an undifferentiated form, transcendent and the Absolute One. (*Ajasya rupe kimapi-svidekam*, RV. I. 164. 6). For the sake of manifestation, display his majesty which is visible as this cosmos (*Etāvānasya Mahimā*). Both *Vāmana* and *Virāṭ* are the two sides of a medal, that which is non-dimensional mathematical point, when descending to the level of time and space, becomes the hypothetical point and becomes magnified as the diameter and the circumference. It was essentially a Vedic doctrine in which *Vāmana* is also called *Vāma*, the Young Miraculous Hero and *Virāṭ* is known as *Palita*, the Grey-haired Eternal Purusha, who exists for ever (RV. 1.164.1). Elsewhere in the Vishṇu Sūkta of the Ṛigveda there is reference to his two aspects, viz. the Young Hero, *Yuvā Kumāra* and the Person of Vast Form, *Bṛihat Śarīra*. It is the power of movement which brings about this transformation, and the movement is symbolised as the Perfect Revolving Wheel of Vishṇu, (*Vṛitta Chakra*, RV. 1. 155.6) explained in the Purāṇa earlier as the *Sudarśana Chakra* or *Kāla Chakra*. In immortal heaven, the divine Creator is a Thousand-fold, but in matter he becomes Vāmana, the Dwarf of measured form (Vn. 93.14).

Chapter 94 describes the city and palace of Bali in *Pātāla*, wrought by Viśvakarmā for him, and goes on further to describe the *Bhāgavata Chakra* of a thousand spoke, (Sahasrāraṁ Vishṇo'r Chakraṁ Sudarśanam, Vn. 94. 11), which Bali and his wife Vindhyāvalī both worshipped. The Great Wheel, *Bhāgavata Mahā Chakra*, is said to have Brahmā as its navel (*nābhi*), Śiva with his triadent as its prominence, the grate mountains as the root of its spokes, the gods with Agni, Indra and Sūrya as the spokes themselves, Vāyu, Waters, Fire, Earth and Heaven as speed, the clouds as the joints of the spokes, and Vālakhilya and other Ṛishis as on the circumference (Vn. 94. 12-15). Mahā Bhāgavata Bali offered worship to Vishṇu's Chakra. This reference reminds of the glorification of Vishṇu's Chakra in the Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā.

Thereafter, in Chapter 95, Bali invoked his grandfather Prahlāda who delivers a homily on the devotees of Vishṇu and the glorification of Nārāyaṇa. A number of gifts are recommended for propitiating Vishṇu and a reference is made to such sacred spots Naimisha, Pushkara, Prayāga and Kokāmukha.

The same theme is continued. A very strange reference is made to King Bali building a temple of Vishṇu with the help of the architects of Mahendra (*Indra*) —

गते हि तस्मिन् मुदिते पितामहे बलेर्बभौ मन्दिरबिन्दुवर्णम् ।
महेन्द्र शिल्पिप्रवरोत केशवं स कारयामास महामहीयान् ॥
(Vn. 95. 70).

This is rather a curious mention which seems to refer to the building of a temple of Keśava by the great Mahendra, the excellent amongst the Śilpins. This would indicate the true age of the Vāmana as the first half of the seventh century A. D. in the time of Mahendra Varman Pallava and that is why there is an explicit reference to Kānchīpuram as the most illustrious capital.

Thus ends the great Vāmana Purāṇa, a dialogue between the sages Pulastya and Nārada, eulogising the glories of Vāmana-Trivikrama Incarnation of Vishṇu.

GHARGHARĀ R.
MĀRKANḌĀ R.
Jhānsa
SARASVATĪ R.
SARASVATĪ R.
OR RĀKSHI R.
ĀPAGĀ R.
CHITĀNG R.
DRISHADVATI R.
OLD YAMUNĀ R.
YAMUNĀ R.
(YAMUNĀ R.)
OLD YAMUNĀ R.
CHITĀNG R. (CHITRĀNGA R.)
Jopra
Jagadhri
Buriya
Sugh
Damla
Alahar
Rudor
Ladwa
Sirsāwa
Arunu Sangam
Dudha-Keri
Pipli
THANESAR
Prithūdaka
Inirbari
Bhore
Jyotesar
Narakatar
Rajakarn
Pulwal
Mangra
PRITHU-VAN
Nāwach
Gunthala
Kāmoda
Amin
Rasulpur
Jhana
KĀM-VAN
ADITI-VAN
Chandaula
Kirmach
Birsali
Ber
Sivan
PHALLKĪ-VAN
Pabla
Burishampur
Batāna
Arunu
SIT-VAN
Chandalāna
Sānwal
Lila kheri
Pharal
Manas
Kultana
Mewali
Sakra
KAITHAL
(Kapisthala)
MADHU-VAN
Jarauri
Dhodha
Okasbalthi
Sila Math
Sabkli
Saga
Shamgarh
Mohana
Pundarīka
Gohda
Barās
Sajumān
Rasina
Bahlolpur
SURAJ-VAN
Basthali
Bālu
VVAS-VAN
Hābari
Nisang
Kharak-Panduān
KARNAL
Agod
Dāchor
Upalāni
Singhwal
Rajond
Julmāna
Upalāna
ŚĀLA-VAN
Alipur
Asandh
Karsindha
Sālwan
Rasālwa
Singhana
Saphidan
PANIPAT
Jhanj
JHIND
Sinkh
Ramrag

Map of Kurukshetra [Cunningham, ASR. XIV]

APPENDIX I

GEOGRAPHY OF KURUKSHETRA

A substantial contribution of the Vāmana Purāṇa is the geographical material of the Kurukshetra region embodied in it, imbibing the ancientmost traditions as well as the several layers of its later evolution.

If we look at the map of the Kurukshetra region the most conspicuous phenomenon is its river system headed by the Sarasvatī and the Dṛishadvatī which flowing with their gushing currents in these drier parts appear as godsend streams of the life-giving element and naturally considered as holy. Together with their many feeders which were mostly in the form of channels overflowing during rains (*varshāvahāḥ kshudra-nadyāḥ*), the two main streams do not follow a normal course as in the case of rivers elsewhere but undergo the unique phenomenon of flowing on the surface for a distance, then losing themselves in the sand for a while, and then re-apperring as fresh streams and in many places collecting their waters in clear ponds or lakes of smaller and bigger dimensions which became famous as *Saras.* All these phenomena of the water courses of Sarasvatī and Dṛishadvatī, especially the former, were observed by the ancient geographical writers and their topographical descriptions have been accurately recorded in the Vāmana Purāṇa. The statement that the western winds of the advancing deserts had resulted in the choking of a large part of the Sannihita lake in Sthāneśvara is confirmed by its present condition. As many as seven restorations of the Sthāneśvara Liṅga recorded in the Purāṇa appear to have been necessitated by these periodic changes in the climatic and geographical conditions of the locality. These are facts which pales-geographers should seriously take into consideration.

The most outsanding fact in the geography of this region is the tract enclosed within the lap of the two streams of Sarasvatī and Dṛishadvatī which had rather an assured supply of water and therefore the scene of much green vegetation and habitable conditions accompanied with forests and plantations so that the region came to be looktd upon as of special sanctity. Originally the area principally

earmarked by the two great river systems and occupied by a central belt of a succession of seven forests running north to south was known by several terms as Samanta-pañchaka, Uttaravedi and Kurukshetra. The name Samanta-pañchaka literally means the territory of which the perimeter (*samanta*) on each of the four sides measured five *yajanas* as clearly stated in the Vāmana (*āsamantād yajanāni pañcha-pañcha cha sarvataḥ*, 22.16) which was thus also called Sarvapañchaka (22.17). This whole region was for religious reasons named Uttaravedi of Brahmā, i. e. the land of sacred yajñās performed along the banks of the Sarasvatī which marked the course of colonisation or original land-taking by the moving Āryan clans.

Two original features of this area sprang into prominant relief of which the original was the belt of seven forests enumerated from north to south as : (1) Kāmyakavana, (2) Aditivana, (3) Vyāsavana, (4) Phalakīvana, (5) Sūryavana, (6) Madhuvana, and (7) Śitavana. Of these Aditivana is marked by the modern town of Amin, Vyāsavana by Vyāsasthalī, Phalakīvana by Pharal, Madhuvana by Mohana, Sūryavana by Sajumān and Śītavana by Sivana. Cunningham also mentions Pṛithūvana, round about Pṛithūdaka and another called Śālavana represented by modern Salon. The list in the Vāmana mentions Kāmyakavana not given by Cunningham. Against this background of perennial forests two centres of population seem to have sprung up along the banks of the Sarasvatī ; one in the north-west and the other in the north-east. Of these two the one in the north-west named Pṛithudaka (modern Pehoa), seems to have been the earlier one wich is mentioned in the Vāmana as the place where the stream Oghavatī mingled its waters with the Sarasvatī and which was the site of two big lakes, viz, Brahmasara and Sannihitasara, and also the place of a shrine sacred to Arantuka Yaksha.

The second notable feature was the conception of the holy land in terms of four Yaksha shrines, punctuating the four corners or important points in the circumambulation of the sanctified area ; one of them which probably was the earliest, since the yātrā started from that point, was Arantuka in Pṛithūdaka. The second one was another Yaksha with the same name, but more probably Tarantuka in Sthāneśvara, which later on became known as Rantuka Yaksha. The third Yaksha shrine was dedicated to Kapila, the husband of Yakshī

Ulūkhalamekhalā who was originally a blood-sucking ogress and whose shrine was near Puṇḍarīka (Vn. 34. 38—39), modern Pundri towards the south end of the region. The fourth Yaksha shrine was that of Machakruka (variant reading Bha-chakruka) which should be located somewhere in the western region. This seems to have been the Samantapañchaka marked by four Yaksha spots. This conception emerged at a time when Yaksha worship preceded that of Śiva worship as in many other regions of the country.

The second stage in the evolution of the holy land of Kurukshetra was marked by the emergence of Kurukshetra as the place brought under cultivation by King Kuru who is said to have cleared an area of seven Krośas under his plough (Vn. 22. 27). At one end of this broad area of forest clearance was located the settlement of Sthāneśvara, also on the bank of the Sarasvatī, whose holy character exceeded even that of Pṛithūdaka from where the name of the famous Sannihita lake was transferred to a pond in the new site of Sthāneśvara. A very important new feature was the establishment of the Sthāneśvara Śiva-Liṅga which became a Tīrtha of wide celebrity, associated with hundreds of other Śiva-Liṅgas, installed in course of time. Besides the Sthāneśvara Śiva-Liṅga, three important lakes marked the site, viz. Sthāṇu Sarovara, Sannihita Sarovara and Kurukshetra Sarovara. Sthāneśvara became the focul point of the region with three hundred and sixty other holy shrines in the bigger *Parikramā*; and it was also believed to be the *Brahmavedi*.

It appears that in the present account of the Vāmana Purāṇa several Tīrthayātrās of Kurukshetra have been faithfully recorded one after the other. In the first one we have a description of the starting point in Sthāṇu Mahā-hrada, i. e. the Sthāṇu lake (33. 18) and its Yaksha called Rantuka (33. 19) and then a series of seven forests, viz. Kāmyakavana, Aditivana, Vyāsavana, Phalakīvana, Sūryavana, Madhuvana and Śītavana, which were to be traversed from north to south. The names of the seven rivers of Kurukshetra were also associated with this original description, viz. Sarasvatī (with Vaitaraṇī, 34. 6), Āpagā, Madhusravā, Amlu Nadī, Kauśikī (34. 7), Dṛishadvatī and Hiraṇyavatī.

The second regular Parikramā or Tīrthayātrā of Kurukshetra is recorded in chapter 34, which begins from Rantuka (34.11), most

probably a Yaksha shrine in Sthāneśvara, and then passing through the following places : Aditivana (34.12 ; at Amin five miles to the south-east of Sthāneśvara), Satata (34.14 ; a place sacred to Vishṇu), Vimala (34.15 ; modern Saga where Vimalasara is located), Pāriplava (34.17 ; confluence of Kauśikī with Dṛishadvatī, 34.18, near Balu, nine miles to the west of Karnal), Dakshāśrama (34.20 ; at Dachor on the Chitāṅga river), Śālūkina (34.21 ; probably Salon or Śālavana), Sarpidadhi (34.22, same as Sarpadarvī of Vana Parva 81.12, modern Safidan), Rantuka, also called Narkoddhāra (34 23, Vana P. 83.15), Pañchanada (34.26), Koṭitīrtha (34.28), Aśvinītīrtha (34.31), Varāhatīrtha (34.32), Somatīrtha (34.33), Ekahaṁsa (34.37), Pauṇḍarīka (34.38, modern Pundri), Muñjavana (34.38), Yakshiṇī (34.39, same as Ulūkhala-mekhalā, designated as Kurukshetra-dvāra, one of the four entrances to Kurukshetra), Pushkara (34.41), Kapila Mahā-Yaksha (34.34), Yugandhara (34.47), Bhūtālaya (34.47), Rāmahrada (35.1, modern Rāmrā), Vaṁśamūla (35.16), Kāyaśodhana (35.17), Lokoddhāra (35.21), Śrītīrtha (35.23), Kapilāhrada (35.24), Sūryatīrtha (35.26), Bhavānīvana (35.29), or Gavāṁ Bhavana (Vana Parva 81-40, modern Gohana), Saṅginī (35.34, modern Sinkh), Brahmāvarta (35.36). The above seems to have been the big Parikramā which continued further to the following places : Sutīrthaka (35.40), Kāmeśvaratīrtha (35.42), Mātṛitīrtha (35.43), Sītāvana (35.44), Śvāviloma (35.47), Daśāśvamedhika (35.49), Mānushatīrtha (35.50, modern Manasa, four miles to the west of Kaithala), Āpagā, a river meeting the Sarasvatī, Brahmodumbara (36.7), Kapilasthatīrtha (36.14), Kalaśītīrtha (36.18), Saraka (36.20), Rudrakoṭi (36.23), Iḍāspada (36.24), Kedāra (36.26), Kiṁrūpa (36.27), Asyajanma (36.28) (Anājanma in Vana Parva, 81.67), Nāgahrada (36.41), modern Nagadu, eleven miles south-west of Sthāneśvara, Trivishṭapa (36.43), Vaitaraṇī Nadī (36.43), Rasāvartana (36.45), Alepaka (36.46), Phalakīvana (36.47) at Pharal on the Oghavatī, 12 miles southwest of Sthāneśvara, Pāṇikhāta (36.52), Miśraka (36.54), Vyāsavana and Manojavatīrtha (36.56), Madhuvana (36.57), Kauśikī-Dṛishadvatī Saṅgama (36.59) at Balu, nine miles west of Karnal, Vyāsasthalī (36.60), Kiṁdattarūpa (36.62), Annatīrtha and Sudinatīrtha (36.63), Kṛitapuṇya, Gaṅgā tīrtha, Gaṅgāhradavana (Vana Parva 81. 85), Koṭitīrtha (35.65), Vāmanaka (36.66), at Burasyampur, seven miles to the south to Sthāneśvara, Jyeshṭhāśrama (36. 69), Koṭitīrtha (36.73) Sūryatīrtha (36.75), Kūlottāraṇakam (36.76) near Kaithal,

Pavanahrada (37.1) at Upalāna five miles to the south west of Dasher, Hanumatsthāna (37.3), Śālihotratīrtha at Vyāsakherī, Śrīkuñja (37.6) near Balu nine miles west of Karnal, Naimishakuñja (37.7), Mahat tīrtha (37.8), Kanyātīrtha (Vana parva, 81.94), Brahma tīrtha (37.13), Soma tīrtha (37.15), Sapta Sārasvata (37.17) (at Magna five miles to the west of Pehoa), Pushakara tīrtha (37.21) Maṅkaṇaka (37.38), Auśanasa (39.1, at Pehoa), Kapālamochana (39.14), Viśvāmitra (39.14),. near Pehoa, Pṛithūdaka (39.16) modern Pehoa, Brahma Yoni (49.20), Avakīṇa (39.24) at Pehoa, Yāyāta (39.46), Madhusravā (39.36) a river at Pehoa, Madhusravatīrtha (29.38), Vasishṭhodvāha (39.39), Aruṇā-Sarasvatī Saṅgama (40.43) three miles to the north-east of Pehoa, Chatvāraḥ Samudrāḥ (41.1), Śatasāhasrakam (41.3), Śatikam (41. 2), Somatīrtha (41.4), at Gumthala, four miles to the south-west of Pehoa, Reṇukāshṭaka = Reṇukatīrtha (41.5), Ṛiṇamochana (41.6), Pañchavaṭa (41.11), Kurukshetra (41.13).

Upto this point we find a very comprehensive enumeration of the Tīrthas forming the sacred shrines and the holy places in the Kurukshetra region as part of its bigger Parikramā.

The list then returns to the description of some secondary Tīrthas in and around Sthāneśvara (46. 1-46, 47) which seems to have been an *antar-grihī* Parikramā of Sthāneśvara, giving the names of most of the Śiva-liṅgas in its orbit. At present the bigger Yātrā of Kurukshetra is said to measure forty-eight Krośas or about hundred miles. In the geographical map as prevailing today five fixed points are Pehoa (Pṛithūdaka), Sthāneśvara (Thāneśvar), Kaithal (Kapisthala), Pundri (Puṇḍarīka) and Safidon (Sarpadarvī) as shown on the map. Chapter 37 gives a list of the holy shrines of Kurukshetra along the banks of the Sarasvatī, starting from Vinaśana (37.1). The names of the seven smaller streams of Sarasvatī are given as Suprabhā, Kāñchanākshī, Manoramā, Oghavatī, Sureṇu, Vimalodakā. It is also stated that the hermitage of Vasishṭha was situated on the eastern bank of Sarasvatī in the Vasishtha-pravāha Tīrtha (41.40) and of Viśvāmitra on its western bank where the Aruṇā has its confluence with the Sarasvatī (43.42). A list of other minor tīrthas is given in chapters 47-51 with their Sthalamāhātmya, extending as far as Mitrā-Varuṇa Āśrama on the banks of the Yamunā (54.14) and Plaksha-prasravaṇa which was the source of Sarasvatī in the Sirmur Hills (64.11) and another Tīrtha named Karapavana (54.12) same as the ancient Karapachava. It may be noted that there is some uncertainty about

the original place of the Yakhsa shrines named Arantuka and Tarantuka. In the Vāmana they are both confused as Rantuka, but in the Āraṇyaka Parva the names are distinctly mentioned as Arantuka and Tarantuka which were their original forms. It also appears that the original Tīrthayātrā started from Pṛithūdaka but later on the starting point became Sthāneśvara where there was also one of the two Yaksha shrines. The modern practice of the pilgrims is to begin the Pradakshiṇā after visiting the holy shrine of Yaksha at Sthāneśvara, known as Ratna yaksha.